THE CASTLE OF LOST SOULS

A thrilling fantasy adventure serial in which you *are the hero.*

THE CASTLE OF LOST SOULS

Part One: The Champion
by Dave Morris and Yve Newnham

GETTING STARTED
This is an adventure like the well-known *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*. Your fate will be determined by the decisions you make – along with a little luck. Read only those numbered paragraphs you are sent to in the text – reading any out of turn may ruin the adventure. You begin by determining your *characteristics*. These show how good an adventurer you are.

1. Roll one die. Add 5 to this number. The total is your *Fighting Prowess*. The higher the score, the better you are at swordplay and other martial skills.
2. Roll two dice and add 10. This is your *Constitution*. A high score enables you to resist hardship, disease and poison, and gives you the strength to fight on even when badly wounded.
3. Roll one die and add 5. This is your *Cleverness* – how fast you can think and act in an emergency. Your *Cleverness* helps when you are trying to jump clear of a hidden trapdoor, hide from a pursuer and so on.
4. Roll one die and add 3. Add 1 more if your *Fighting Prowess* is 7 or less. Add 1 if your *Constitution* is 14 or less. This is your *Magical Fortitude*. The higher it is, the better chance you have of resisting the effects of hostile sorcery.

What you have just done is called *rolling up a character*. Note down your scores in each characteristic on the *Adventure Record*.

Adventure Record

Characteristic	*Initial Score*	*Current Score*
Fighting Prowess		
Constitution		
Cleverness		
Magical Fortitude		
Honour		

Armour

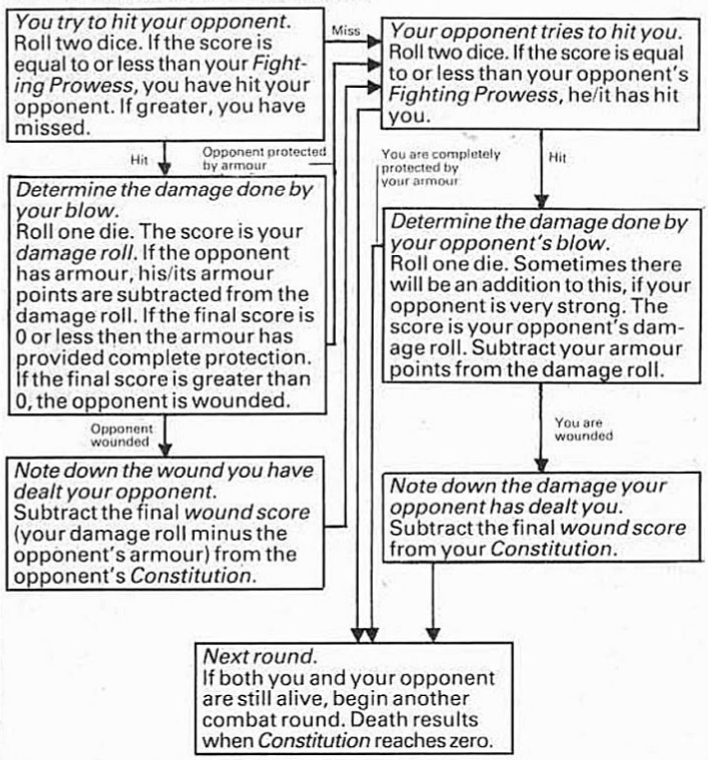
Gold Pieces

Potions

Other

Combat
When you have to fight, you will be told the opponent's *Fighting Prowess, Constitution* and armour. Note these down before starting the combat.

A fight consists of a number of *combat rounds*. During each round, both you and your opponent get to strike at one another. The sequence for each combat round is as follows:



Keeping Track of Your Characteristics
Keep careful note of your characteristics on your Adventure Record. Your *Constitution* could change quite a bit, as you take wounds in combat or suffer other hardships. Sometimes your other characteristics may change as well. Make a special note of your initial score in each characteristic as (unless you are told otherwise) your score in a characteristic cannot exceed its initial value. If you successfully complete this adventure, you will have a chance to permanently increase one of your characteristics.

Armour
The armour you are wearing reduces the damage you take from a blow. Your opponents will often have armour as well. In the case of monsters, this usually represents their tough skin rather than being actual armour. 1-point armour is leather (or thick hide); 2-point is chainmail (or horny scales, like a dragon's). You start your adventure with chainmail armour, which will absorb 2 points from the damage of any blow that strikes you. Note this down on your Adventure Record.

Equipment
You must note down the equipment you have on your Adventure Record. As well as the chainmail, you have a sword, a dagger, a bow and six arrows, a backpack for holding treasure, a *Potion of Healing* (see below), and 10 gold pieces. Whenever you pick something up during the adventure, note it down on the adventure record.

The Potion of Healing
You start with a flask containing one dose of this potion. When you drink it (which you can do at any time except during a combat), roll one die and add 3. This is the number of *Constitution* points you recover. The potion cannot, however, increase your *Constitution* above its initial score.

Honour
The more chivalrously you behave during the adventure, the more *Honour* you will acquire. Conversely, you lose *Honour* by behaving in an underhand fashion. In many cases it may seem easier to take a dishonourable course of action, but be warned that this could make parts of your subsequent adventures more difficult. You begin with 3 points of *Honour*.

The Adventure
You are a famous and skilled warrior. Your many adventures have pitted you against all manner of foes – wily goblins in the Spiderbite Hills, mummified guards of desert tombs, and ghoul-witches of Dastragor Marsh, many a crazed wizard and more than a dozen of the kingdom's mightiest knights. Your fame (or notoriety) precedes you into every town and village, so you are not surprised when you trudge into yet another smoky tavern to hear the rowdy hubbub stop as faces turn to▷

▷look at you. You drop your backpack by the hearth and sit at an empty table, your broadsword carefully propped against the chair.

The landlord pours you ale while whispers flit among the other patrons. 'I suppose they are unused to seeing an adventurer in a town such as this,' you say to him.

'Allow me to correct you,' he replies cheerfully. 'Lately, adventurers have been as thick as flies on the back of an old horse. My other customers are surely discussing your chances on the morrow. Aha! Look there.' He gestures towards two men counting money. 'I believe, Logbrew the miller has just wagered five silvers on your acceptance.'

You lean forward, interested now, and motion the innkeeper to sit down. 'Please join me for a glass of wine and explain all this to me. I have just arrived in town after a long trek through the uninhabited forest to the east.'

'Well then, you will not have heard of the interviews tomorrow. Hogron, head of the wealthy and prestigious Greengosh family since his father's death some months ago, seeks to hire a warrior for some great quest. Word has been sent far and wide, and adventurers have come here from many leagues away to apply for the position. The candidate selected by Hogron and his brothers stands to profit richly.'

After getting full details from the innkeeper, you take a room for the night. In the morning, you arise and have a light breakfast. Refreshed, you set out briskly for the Greengosh estates at the west of the town. You are confident that the interviews are a mere formality and that you will be selected for the quest.

The Greengosh mansion is an imposing edifice in some thirty acres of grounds. A gaunt servant in a black coat opens the door and escorts you upstairs to a room off a long gallery. Shortly, you are joined by a well-groomed man of about forty who introduces himself as Hogron. After a few questions relating to your previous adventures and preferred fighting technique, he jots down some notes in a ledger he carries. He tells you the interviews are nearly all complete and so you will not have to wait long. Then he leaves. Turn to **1**.

1: After a few hours, Hogron calls the candidates to the main hall. You look around at the others, Most seem to be scoundrels or opportunist ruffians, but there are one or two whose exploits rival yours.

Hogron steps forward. 'After due and careful consideration of the, er, *corroborated* adventures of each candidate, my brothers and I have chosen Salakar as our champion.'

You are horrified to see Hogron clasp hands with Salakar, whom you have always regarded as a loudmouthed braggart! A disgruntled murmur from some of the other candidates is silenced by the five pieces of gold each is given for his trouble. You take your gold with bitter heart, trying to think of a way to cancel or reverse Hogron's decision and make yourself champion. Do you: Challenge Salakar to a duel to show who is the more worthy champion? If so, turn to **91**. Suggest that two of you would be better off than one? If so, turn to **45**. Leave now but wait outside the mansion, and follow Salakar? If so, turn to **80**. Wait outside the hall and eavesdrop on what Hogron has to say to his new champion? If so, turn to **14**. Attack Salakar right now? If so, turn to **85**.

2: You are now Salakar. Your initial characteristics are: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; *Cleverness*: 7; *Magical Fortitude*: 5.

You have 2-point armour (chainmail), standard equipment, 12 gold pieces, and a silver amulet which marks you out as the Greengosh family's champion.

You have no potions, and no *Honour* either. Hogron told you something about getting a crystal ball and the ashes of a saint, along with some other items. None of that matters for now – you just have to find a certain cave up in the hills and get some magical boots that Hogron says are hidden there. Simple. Turn to **53**.

3: You are some kind of sucker for punishment. Again you lose *Constitution* (one die's worth). You give up on the pool for now. You can try the stone slab (turn to **52**) or return to the entrance (turn to **21**).

4: A servant nearly spotted you, but you heard him coming and dived behind a tapestry. You go back to listen at the door, and hear Hogron saying something about the ashes of a saint and a crystal ball. There could be a lot more that you missed. You slink out of the house and wait to follow Salakar when he emerges. Turn to **80**.

5: Whether or not you were the original champion, Hogron is delighted you brought the magical boots. 'Excellent!' he cries, showing the boots to his brothers. 'Wearing these, you will be able to travel to the demon's castle and free my father's soul!'

You smile nervously at them, but your're in too far to back out now. Turn to **104**.

6: Your pride prevents you from continuing the adventure. But you have only enough gold for a few more days at the inn, then you must move on. A balladeer tells you that Salakar's seven brothers are all great warriors who will be after you from now on. Perhaps you will accept Hogron's offer after all. Turn to **101**.

7: Your treachery has paid off – Salakar lies dead at your feet. Being the sort of cur you are, you decide to loot his body. You get 12 gold pieces. There is a silver amulet around his neck. If you take it, note it down on your Adventure Record. You lose 1 point of *Honour*, by the way. That's if you had any left. Now go to **16**.

8: Hogron accuses you of murdering Salakar, and has you seized and thrown from the mansion. You hadn't found the magical boots anyway so (as Hogron yells to you now from an upstairs window) you couldn't expect to be paid. You can rejoin the adventure next issue.

9: Salakar manages to stay in the saddle. He wheels around, levels his lance, and charges again. You spur your horse on, determined to unseat him this time. Roll for both of you to se if you hit. If you hit Salakar but he missed you then turn to **24**. If Salakar hit you but you missed him, turn to **86**. If you both hit, turn to **39**. If you both missed, you turn for another charge. Roll again until someone hits.

10: The liquid in the pool looks strange. It is probably magical. What do you want to do? Put on the long gloves (if you have them) and pull the lever (turn to **65**)? Take off the silver amulet (if you have it) and pull the lever (turn to **23**)? Drink from the pool and then pull the lever (turn to **75**)? Reconsider your options (turn to **50**)?

11: The right-hand tunnel leads to a low-ceilinged chamber. You can return to the cave entrance (turn to **21**) or enter the chamber (turn to **49**).

12: If you are Salakar, turn to **33**. If not, turn to **72**.

13: You return to where you got the blue satin gloves. You can replace them if you like (if you still have them). Go to **34**.

14: You lurk in the corridor outside the main hall, trying to listen to what Hogron is telling Salakar. You hear him say something about getting some magical boots. Try to roll your *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **4**. If you fail, turn to **87**.

15: Salakar is still the champion. You hear from the innkeeper's daughter that he is about to set out. You decide to follow him – something will turn up. Turn to **80**.

16: You go on into the hills for almost an hour. Salakar seems to be following the stream. Suddenly a rabble of hill goblins leap out of the trees nearby, hurling rocks and small javelins. Roll one die. On a roll of 1-3 you have been hit by one missile. On a 4-5, two have hit. On a 6 you have been hit by three missiles. Armour subtracts from each missile's damage separately. Take any damage off your *Constitution*. Before you can retaliate, the goblins scatter and run off. Turn to **62**.

17: Salakar's lance hurls you from the saddle. You hit the ground with a jarring impact that makes your head swim. Try to roll *Constitution* or less on four dice. If you succeed, turn to **90**. If you fail, turn to **67**.

18: You rush over to Salakar He is coughing blood – he hasn't long to live. 'I've failed, he groans, 'but you can carry on the quest. At least wipe out that giant for me. Here... take this.' He gives you a silver amulet from around his neck. 'That makes you the Greengosh family champion. In case Hogron thinks you killed me for it, tell him you know he needs a saint's ashes and a crystal ball. In the first place, though, you've got to get some magical boots from the cave up there.

You allow yourself but a moment of pity as your old rival passes from this world. Then you filch the 12 gold pieces in his belt-pouch. You creep up the path to the cave. You can see the giant just inside, chewing on a leg (not his own) for lunch. You draw your sword and attack. Take 3 points off the giant's initial *Constitution* for the wound Salakar did him. Turn to **82**.

19: You flip the lid of the chest open. Roll two dice, trying to score your *Cleverness* or less. If you succeed, turn to **20**. If you fail, turn to **32**.

20: Phew! You were just quick enough to dodge three sharp needles that shot out of the lock and flew past your ear. They were probably poisoned. Turn to **79**.

21: You are just inside the cave mouth. You can see two tunnels leading away. You will need a lantern if you wish to go down either tunnel. You can take the left tunnel (turn to **77**), the right tunnel (turn to **11**) or leave the cave (turn to **83**).

22: You stand over Salakar's body. Several of the other candidates watch, aghast. There is a moment of silence. You turn to Hogron, whose expression mingles shock and distaste. 'An interesting way to establish your credentials,' he sighs, obviously offended by your churlishness. 'The position of champion appears to have become vacant. Perhaps you will accept the job in Salakar's place?'

You feel the weight of his moral censure – lose 1 point of *Honour*. Perhaps you will behave more chivalrously in future. Perhaps not. Turn to **101**.

23: Turn to **29**.

24: You are satisfied to see your lance strike Salakar's shield with bone-crunching impact. Your own shield is barely scratched by his inaccurate blow. Roll one die and add 3 to determine the damage for this mighty blow! He seems to have lost his contempt for you now. He could be thrown from the saddle – roll two dice and compare the score with Salakar's *Cleverness*. If the dice score is more than his *Cleverness*, turn to **71**. If the score is less than or equal to his *Cleverness*, turn to **9**.

25: You are in a small chamber with a wooden chest in the middle of the floor. You can try to open it (turn to **19**) or go back (turn to **21**).

26: Hogron will brief you on your adventure tomorrow. You decide to return to your room at the inn. As midnight approaches, you hear a creaking sound. Someone is coming in through the window! You leap out of bed and grasp your sword. Your assailant is a black-garbed assassin.

Assassin: *Fighting Prowess*: 5, *Constitution*: 6, 1-point armour.

Fight. You are naked at the moment, so your chainmail armour will not count. If you win, turn to **63**. If you lose, turn to **48**. If the assassin rolls a 12 on two dice when trying to hit you, turn to **96**.

27: You burn the troll's corpse and take the boots. They are covered with strange runes and sigils. You take them back to town. Turn to **5**.

28: Congratulations on killing a defenceless old man. Lose a point of *Honour*. You retrieve your dagger and decide it is time to get away before you're discovered. You creep out of the mansion and conceal yourself in the bushes like the worm that you are. You wait for Salakar to come out and then follow him. Turn to **80**.

29: A shiver runs through your whole body as your fingers thrust into the pool. Roll one die. You lose this many points of *Constitution* – and armour does not protect you. You jump back from the pool. You can return to the cave mouth (turn to **36**), try and push the stone slab aside (turn to **41**) or take some special precautions (turn to **10**).

30: You are dead. If you wish to have another go at the adventure, roll up a new character and start at the beginning. If you don't like the idea of winding back time like that, it is possible to join at the beginning of next issue's adventure.

31: Salakar does not get up. He has been knocked cold by the fall from his horse. Turn to **37**.

32: Three sharp needles fly out of the lock and strike you on the cheek. You feel a burning pain where they scratched you. Poison. Try to roll your *Constitution* or less on four dice. If you succeed, turn to **69**. If you fail, turn to **30**.

33: A pesky adventurer, disgruntled at not being selected as champion, followed you and tried to cause trouble. You tell Hogron how you finished him off, but Hogron is more concerned that you haven't brought back the magical boots. He pays you a derisory 5 gold pieces and shows you the door. You can try the whole adventure from the beginning, using a new character, or you can join at the beginning of next issue's adventure.

34: You are back at the cave mouth. A couple of rats are chewing on the giant's body, but they scuttle into the shadows as you approach. You can take the left-hand tunnel (turn to **13**), the right-hand tunnel (turn to **92**) or go back to town (turn to **43**).

35: Struggling to remain conscious, you get to your feet. A squire runs up and gives you your sword. Salakar has already got his sword ready and is closing in. You fight. If you win, turn to **37**. If you lose, turn to **48**.

36: You are back at the cave mouth. You can take the left-hand tunnel (turn to **61**) or the right-hand one (turn to **100**). Or you can leave the cave (turn to **81**).

37: You have beaten Salakar. Hogron rushes forward. 'How can I apologize to you for my misjudgement?' he says. 'I see now that Salakar's great deeds were nothing beside your own. He won me over with his empty boastfulness, but I can see now that your noble reticence disguised a fierce and peerless skill. Please forgive me for my wretched stupidity, and agree to become our family's champion.'

You think there is a strong element of sarcasm in Hogron's obsequious manner. If you turn him down, go to **6**. If you agree to become the champion in Salakar's place, turn to **101**.

38: Hogron comes forward. 'You have certainly shown more skill than Salakar. Since he himself offered you the choice of competition, I feel sure he will agree that you should be our champion in his place.'

He gives Salakar ten gold pieces for his trouble. The expression on Salakar's face suggests you may have made a lifelong enemy. Turn to **26**.

39: Both your lances find their targets. Roll one die and add 3. This is how much damage you take; your chainmail armour absorbs 2 points of this. Roll the damage to Salakar as well.

Each of you must roll *Cleverness* or less on two dice or be thrown from the saddle. If you both make it, turn to **64**. If you make the roll and he doesn't, turn to **71**. If he makes the roll and you don't, turn to **17**. If neither of you makes it, turn to **98**.

40: Do you have the silver amulet Salakar was wearing? If so, turn to **56**. If not, turn to **46**.

41: All your strength cannot budge the stone slab. You must find some other way to get into the tunnel beyond. You could try pulling the lever in the pool (turn to **29**), though you might like t take some precautions first (turn to **10**). If you wish to go back to the cave mouth, turn to **36**.

42: Several of the other candidates pull you and Salakar apart. You hear someone say you are a sore loser. The taunts don't hurt as much as the 2 *Honour* points you've just lost.

'Obviously you are a thoroughly unworthy knave!' cries Hogron, shaking with rage. 'To disturb a bereaved household with your coarse and objectionable ways! You have merely confirmed my... our opinion that Salakar is the right man for the job. Now begone.'

You are unceremoniously hurled into the street. There is nothing for it but to wait and follow Salakar when he comes out. You'll find some way to redeem yourself – or bring about Salakar's demise, perhaps? Turn to **80**.

43: Turn to **12**.

44: Hogron comes over after examining the butts. 'You have scarcely demonstrated your overwhelming superiority,' he says to you. 'My decision stands – Salakar of the Wild Moor is our champion.' You leave, deciding that the best thing is to follow Salakar when he begins his adventure. Turn to **80**.

45: Salakar laughs derisively. 'Pah! Why should I want to team up with you?' he chortles. 'So few people have been witness to your 'mighty deeds' that one is forced to dismiss them as your own lies.' Resentment boils up within you. The reason there's no-one to corroborate your greatest exploits is that you prefer to adventure alone. You could relate some of your most daring exploits (turn to **94**), or challenge Salakar to a duel to show him just how skilled a warrior you really are (turn to **91**). Come to that, you could draw your sword and attack him here and now (turn to **85**).

46: Hogron gives you a cold glare. 'Where are the magical boots?' he demands. 'Without them, the quest cannot proceed.' You admit to failure. Hogron gives you 5 gold pieces and has you shown out. If you want, you can roll up a new character and try the whole adventure through from the start. Or you can keep this character and join at the beginning of next issue's adventure.

47: You run out of Greengosh mansion. No-one follows you. You are pretty certain that the servant would not recognize you if he saw you again. You wait behind a tree. When Salakar comes out you follow him. Turn to **80**.

48: Unfortunately you are dead. If you wish to continue the adventure, roll a new character. Your new character has heard all about the Greengosh family's requirements from rejected candidates. You decide to follow their champion, Salakar, when he begins his quest. Turn to **80**.

49: There is a pool of shimmering blue liquid in the middle of this chamber. Beyond this is a heavy stone slab which appears to block up a tunnel. The pool is about eighteen inches deep with some sort of lever at the bottom.

What do you want to do? Return to the cave entrance (turn to **21**)? Reach into the pool and pull the lever (turn to **59**)? Try to push the stone slab aside (turn to **52**)?

50: In the middle of the chamber is a pool of bright blue liquid. A heavy stone slab blocks another tunnel on the far side of the chamber. The pool is about eighteen inches deep and has some sort of lever at the bottom. Do you want to: Go back to the cave entrance (turn to **36**)? Reach into the pool and pull the lever (turn to **29**)? Try to push the stone slab aside (turn to **41**)? Take some precautions (turn to **10**)?

51: Whatever excuses you make don't impress Hogron. Turn to **8**.

52: The slab is obviously blocking another tunnel. You cannot shift it – even the giant would have had trouble. You can reach into the pool and pull the lever (turn to **59**) or return to the entrance (turn to **21**).

53: After a while you find the cave set in the hillside. Stealthily you follow the narrow path which snakes towards it. There are human skulls scattered around, but you aren't so easily frightened. Inside, with his back to you, sits a giant chewing on the leg of his last victim. You decide to attack. Turn to **82**.

54: You hurl the dagger. Try to roll your *Fighting Prowess* or less on two dice. If you succeed, roll one die to see how much damage the dagger does. Unless you kill the servant with this one throw (he has a *Constitution* of 3 and, of course, no

▷armour), his shouts will bring Salakar and Hogron. If you kill him turn to **28**. If you don't, turn to **74**.

55: You drop your lance and take your sword from the squire who runs up to you. Salakar is struggling to his feet, dazed. He seems confused as he takes his sword from another squire. You ride down on him, sword raised. Surely you have him now! Fight. Because you are on horseback, and thus have the advantage, subtract 1 from Salakar's *Fighting Prowess*. If you win, turn to **37**. If you lose, turn to **48**.

56: Hogron notices the amulet. 'Did you get this from Salakar, then?' he asks, obviously suspecting you of foul play. You tell him that Salakar gave it to you. 'Well, perhaps you can mention another couple of items that Salakar was going to obtain later in his quest?' replies Hogron. 'He might have told you when he gave you the amulet.' Do you mention the ashes of a saint and a crystal ball (turn to **46**), a brass helmet and a goblin's left hand (turn to **8**) or nothing at all (turn to **51**)?

57: You leap at Salakar with your sword raised for a mighty blow. Startled, he reaches for his own weapon. Because you surprised him, he doesn't get to strike at you in the first combat round. After that, the fight proceeds normally.

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour. If you lose, turn to **70**. If you win, turn to **7**.

58: Salakar is about eighty yards ahead of you. You glance aside just for a moment. When you look back, you see Salakar struggling with several hill goblins which are swarming over him. He crushes two or three with his shield; seeing this display of martial prowess the others run for it. As a parting shot, one of them throws a tiny javelin which catches Salakar in the arm. He is slightly wounded now. Do you want to attack and finish him off? If so, turn to **93**. If not, turn to **78**.

59: The moment that you plunge your hands into the blue waters, you can feel an icy chill run through your body. Roll one die – this is how many points of *Constitution* you lose from the numbing cold of the waters. Armour makes no difference in this case. You jump back from the pool. Do you want to try again (turn to **3**), have a go at pushing the stone slab aside (turn to **52**) or return to the entrance (turn to **21**).

60: Somehow you resist the fell sorcery that threatened you. That was worse than the time the demon-lady Halthania tried to get you drunk on wyrm's blood! You reconsider your options. Go to **50**.

61: The tunnel leads to a small chamber. You have been here before. If you didn't take the gloves last time then you could take them now. Turn to **36**.

62: You press on. You will need your wits about you to find Salakar's objective. Try to roll *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **88**. If you fail, turn to **99**.

63: You dump the assassin's body out of the window and go back to bed. You have a fairly shrewd idea who sent the assassin (or should have), but you'll have plenty of time to settle your score with him when you've sorted out the Greengosh family's problem. Due to the night's disturbance you oversleep, and have to rush to keep your appointment with Hogron and his brothers. Turn to **101**.

64: You just managed to stay in the saddle! You wheel your horse around. Salakar is already charging in towards you. You will not give in. Roll as before to see if you hit (and do the same for Salakar). If you hit Salakar but he missed you, turn to **24**. If Salakar hit you but you missed him, turn to **86**. If you both hit one another, turn to **39**. If you both missed, roll again. Keep doing this until one or both of you scores a hit.

65: You feel a slight chill, but no ill-effects. You pull the lever and the stone slab grates aside. Beyond it, a tunnel leads down, with rough steps hewn into the rock. Do you want to go down the steps (turn to **84**) or go back to the entrance (turn to **34**).

66: You get out of the mansion safely, but had to leave your dagger behind. You could be traced. You rush back to the inn, gather your gear together and depart at once. If you wish to resume the adventure, roll up a new character. The new character hears a few rumours from other champions and decides to follow the Greengosh family's champion, Salakar, on the first part of his quest. Turn to **80**.

67: You try to rise, but everything goes black. After a while you wake up in your room at the inn. You ache all over. The innkeeper's wife brings you a rich, warming broth and a flagon of ale, however, and all your wounds are soon forgotten. Restore your *Constitution* to normal and turn to **15**.

68: You meet Salakar for the joust at noon the following day. His horse is richly caparisoned in scarlet and grey, and his armour gleams in the sun. But all this finery cannot disguise a certain awkwardness in the saddle. You feel the choice of a joust gives you the advantage. Now is your chance to teach him a lesson.

The two of you ride to opposite sides of the field and rein in. Hogron raises a staff. You wait, staring across the field into the visored eyes of your rival. Hogron brings the staff down, and your horses thunder across the sward. Your shield and lance are steady, your concentration absolute.

Roll *Fighting Prowess* or less on two dice for a hit, as usual. Do the same for Salakar. Note down his characteristics now:

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour; *Cleverness*: 7.

If both of you fail to hit on the first charge, you turn for another attempt. This continues until somebody's lance lands home. If Salakar hit you but you missed him, turn to **86**. If you hit Salakar but he missed you, turn to **24**. If you both hit one another, turn to **39**.

69: You manage to shrug off the worst effects of the poison, but you feel groggy. Reduce your *Fighting Prowess* by 1 point for the rest of this issue's adventure. Reduce your *Constitution* by 1 point *permanently*. Turn to **79**.

70: Well, some champion you would have made! Continue the adventure using Salakar as your character. Turn to **2**, remembering to keep track of any wounds he has taken.

71: Salakar is thrown from his horse by the impact. You almost wince as he hits the ground with a sickening crunch. Roll four dice and compare the result with Salakar's *Constitution*. If the dice score exceeds his *Constitution*, turn to **31**. If the score is less than or equal to his *Constitution*, turn to **55**.

72: Were you actually selected as the family's champion? If so, turn to **46**. If you left town tailing Salakar, turn to **40**.

73: Well, at least you spat it out in time. You look around you and take stock of your options. Turn to **50**.

74: For an old fellow, the servant can make a lot of noise! His yells will quickly bring Hogron and Salakar and a host of others. You run for it. Turn to **66**.

75: You *drank* it!? What do adventurers use for brains these days? You must roll one die. This is how much *Constitution* you lose – your armour does not protect you. Also, try to roll *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **73**. If not, turn to **95**.

76: You meet the following afternoon at a bridge quite near the town. Hogron has come along in a curtained carriage to watch. There is some honour in such a duel, because you are not taking undue advantage of Salakar's low *Constitution*. Gain 1 point of *Honour*. Salakar stands ready. At a signal, you both draw your swords and close to fight.

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour.

If you win, turn to **37**. If you lose, turn to **48**. If you are faring badly at any point, you can submit by throwing down your sword (turn to **102**).

77: You are in a narrow tunnel. You can go deeper into the hillside (turn to **25**) or turn back (turn to **21**).

78: Salakar clambers up a winding path. At the top is a cave entrance with skulls scattered in front of it. Suddenly a ferocious giant leaps out of the cave and brings his club down on Salakar, splintering his shield. He slices back, wounding his huge opponent in the thigh. The giant bellows with rage and deals Salakar another mighty blow, dashing him from the ledge. He tumbles down the slope to where you are. You see the giant amble back into the cave without noticing you. Turn to **18**.

79: Looking inside the chest, you see two strange gloves. They are made of blue satin and cover your whole arm right up to the shoulder. If you take them, mark them down on your Adventure Record. You return to the entrance. Turn to **36**.

80: Salakar spends some time in town buying equipment for an adventure. You buy the same things: a lantern and a flint and tinder. This costs you 2 gold pieces. Turn to **103**.

81: You are on the ledge outside the cave. You can return to town if you think you have all that Hogron wants (turn to **12**). If your business here is unfinished, turn to **36**.

82: The giant does not get to strike back in the first combat round because you surprised him. After that the fight proceeds normally.

Giant: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 18; 1-point armour.

He fights with the leg he was eating for lunch, using it as a club. He is so strong that he adds 1 point to his damage rolls. If you beat him, turn to **21**. If you lose, turn to **30**.

83: You are on the ledge outside the cave. If you are sure you have what Hogron wants, go back to town (turn to **12**). Otherwise, you could have another look at the cave (turn to **21**).

84: The steps lead down into a dank cavern. On a rock ahead of you, you can see two fine boots of grey leather. Before you can reach them, however, there is a terrible shriek and a troll leaps out at you, raking with its bronze claws. You must fight.

Troll: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 7; 1-point armour.

Trolls regenerate damage. At the start of each round, add 1 point to the troll's *Constitution unless you have already killed it.* (Once its *Constitution* is down to zero, you can burn this appalling creature with fire from your lantern to prevent it regenerating.) Regeneration can never increase the troll's *Constitution* above its initial score. If you win the fight, turn to **27**. If you lose, turn to **30**.

85: You draw your sword and charge at the amazed Salakar with a cry of rage. In the first combat round he doesn't get to strike back because you caught him unprepared. You fight. The fight then proceeds normally.

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess*: 8 *Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour.

If the fight goes on for more than four combat rounds, turn to **42**. If you win before then, turn to **22**. If you lose before then, turn to **48**.

86: The damage roll for this massive blow is one die plus 3 points. Your armour will protect you from 2 points of this. Your whole arm is numbed. Try to roll your *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **64**. If you fail, turn to **17**.

87: Oops! An aged servant comes around the corridor and sees you skulking about. He is about to call for help. You must act quickly. You can run (turn to **47**), try to kill him by throwing your dagger at his throat (turn to **54**) or wait (turn to **89**).

88: You see a cave entrance up in the hillside ahead of you. Maybe that's where Salakar was going. You draw closer, alert to any danger. A narrow path leads up to the cave. You clamber up it as quietly as possible. There are skulls strewn about the ledge in front of the cave, adventurers like yourself perhaps? You can see the cause just inside – a giant seated on a low slab of rock. He seems to be eating something, so you can take him unawares. You attack. Turn to **82**.

89: Hearing the servant call out, Hogron comes into the corridor. Before you can think of an excuse, the servant says, 'He was listening at your key'ole, sir.'

Hogron glares at you. 'I admire a certain tenacity in a man,' he says slowly, 'but if you harbour any hopes of becoming our family's champion, I must dash them here and now. Salakar has agreed to the mission, and your continued presence in my house will be regarded as trespassing.' You leave at once, deciding that it is better to wait outside and follow Salakar when he emerges. Turn to **80**.

90: Somehow you manage to get to your feet. A squire rushes up with your sword. You take it and stand ready. Salakar is already bearing down on you with his sword raised. You fight. Being on horseback gives Salakar the advantage, so subtract 1 from your *Fighting Prowess* for the duration of this combat. If you win, turn to **37**. If you lose, turn to **48**.

91: Sneering, he accepts your challenge. 'So sure am I of success,' he declares, 'that I leave to you the choice of combat. Will you joust, or duel, or compete with me on the archery field?'

A duel involves a straight fight, a joust is strenuous and demanding, while archery tests only your skill. Your assessment of Salakar is that he is unused to hardship and would fare badly in a punishing joust. What do you choose? A joust (turn to **68**), a duel (turn to **76**) or archery (turn to **97**)?

92: You go back to the chamber with the blue pool. Steps lead down from the arch that the stone slab previously blocked. Do you want to go down the steps (turn to **84**) or return (turn to **34**).

93: The wound from the goblin's javelin cost Salakar 2 points of *Constitution*. Knock this off his total before the fight begins. Turn to **57**.

94: Hogron and Salakar listen to your tales. After some time (fifteen minutes or more – you're just on the story of how you rescued the Princess Ezmerelda from the white fortress of Hangdrak), Hogron interrupts you: 'This is all very, um, stirring stuff, I'm sure, but I have made my choice. Salakar is our champion.'

You could challenge Salakar to a duel (turn to **91**), attack him here and now (turn to **85**) or wait outside and follow him later (turn to **80**).

95: You swallowed the liquid. Your soul feels as though it's being torn from your body. Fingers of ice seem to stroke across your skin. You scream. Try to roll your *Magical Fortitude* or less on two dice. If you make it, turn to **60**. If you fail, go to **30**.

96: The assassin misses you and instead hits the innkeeper's cat, which had chosen to curl up on the foot of your bed. The cat howls and leaps across the room. It has only lost a couple of inches of tail, but you are enraged that your assailant should have hurt a dumb animal. You go beserk, adding 1 to *Fighting Prowess* for this combat only. If you win, turn to **63**. If you lose, turn to **48**.

97: By choosing an archery competition you are not taking any advantage of Salakar's low *Constitution*. Gain 2 points of *Honour*. The competition is held on the lawn of the Greengosh mansion. Hogron shows you the butts, about 70 yards away. To score a hit on the butt you must roll your *Fighting Prowess* or less on two dice. Do the same for Salakar, whose *Fighting Prowess* is 8. Compare your score and Salakar's when you have each taken five shots at the butts.

If you scored more than Salakar, turn to **38**. If you scored the same or less, turn to **44**.

98: You both take a tumble. Roll *Constitution* or less on four dice. Make this roll for Salakar as well. If you both fail, turn to **67**. If you succeed but Salakar doesn't, turn to **37**. If Salakar succeeds but you fail, turn to **67**. If you both succeed, turn to **35**.

99: Another goblin ambush! Roll one die. A roll of 1-3 indicates one missile has hit you. A 4-5 indicates two missiles. On a 6 you have been struck by three missiles. Each missile does you one die of damage less 2 points for your armour. Cross any damage you have taken off your *Constitution* and turn to **62**.

100: The tunnel leads to a low-ceilinged chamber. You can go back to the entrance (turn to **36**) or enter the chamber (turn to **50**).

101: In their father's study, Hogron and his brothers brief you on your mission. Hogron gives you a silver amulet, by which all friends of the Greengosh family will know you are their champion. 'This will be a long and challenging quest,' he explains, 'and you will need to gather many curious objects for it – a saint's ashes, a crystal ball and a four-leaf clover, among other items. At first, though, you have only to go to a certain cave up in the hills and bring back some magical boots you will find there. I advise you to buy a lantern and a flint and tinder before you set out.' After describing roughly where the cave is, he gives you a pouch containing 6 gold pieces, wishes you good luck and sends you on your way.

You buy the equipment Hogron recommended, at a cost of 2 gold pieces, and set out. Barely two hours' walk from the town, you find the cave you are looking for. You climb the steep path leading to it. On the ledge in front of the cave there are several human skulls. Forewarned, you peer into the cave. A giant is sitting inside with his back to you, chewing on something. You decide to attack him. Turn to **82**.

102: You cast your sword aside. Lose 1 point of *Honour*. You are at Salakar's mercy, but unfortunately he is a rather merciless chap. Roll one die. On a roll of 6 he decides you're not worth killing (turn to **15**); on a roll of 1-5 he cuts you down (turn to **48**).

103: You follow Salakar into the hills north of the town. He is so intent on watching the trail ahead that he doesn't spot you. After an hour or so he pauses by a brook to fill his waterskin. You could attack him now. If you do, turn to **57**. If not, turn to **58**.

104: You have successfully completed the first part of your quest. Gain 1 point of *Honour*. You can now attempt to improve your score in either *Fighting Prowess, Magical Fortitude* or *Cleverness*. Decide which characteristic you will try to improve, then roll two dice. If the number roll is *more* than or equal to your current score, you have learnt from your experiences – increase the characteristic permanently by 1 point. Hogron gives you 25 gold pieces. He also gives you a bottle containing one dose of *Potion of Healing*. The adventure continues next issue...□

A thrilling fantasy adventure serial in which you *are the hero. If you did not successfully complete last issue's adventure or are starting the adventure for the first time (without playing through part one in the last issue), begin at* Getting Started, *below. If you have completed Part One, go straight to 1.*

THE CASTLE OF LOST SOULS

Part Two: The Quest
by Dave Morris and Yve Newnham

GETTING STARTED

This is an adventure like the well-known *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*. Your fate will be determined by the decisions you make – along with a little luck. Read only those numbered paragraphs you are sent to in the text – reading any out of turn may ruin the adventure. You begin by determining your *characteristics*. These show how good an adventurer you are.

1. Roll one die. Add 5 to this number. The total is your *Fighting Prowess*. The higher the score, the better you are at swordplay and other martial skills.

2. Roll two dice and add 10. This is your *Constitution*. A high score enables you to resist hardship, disease and poison, and gives you the strength to fight on even when badly wounded.

3. Roll one die and add 5. This is your *Cleverness* – how fast you can think and act in an emergency. Your *Cleverness* helps when you are trying to jump clear of a hidden trapdoor, hide from a pursuer and so on.

4. Roll one die and add 3. Add 1 more if your *Fighting Prowess* is 7 or less. Add 1 if your *Constitution* is 14 or less. This is your *Magical Fortitude*. The higher it is, the better chance you have of resisting the effects of hostile sorcery.

What you have just done is called *rolling up a character*. Note down your scores in each characteristic on the *Adventure Record*.

Adventure Record

Characteristic	*Initial Score*	*Current Score*
Fighting Prowess		
Constitution		
Cleverness		
Magical Fortitude		
Honour		

Armour

Gold Pieces

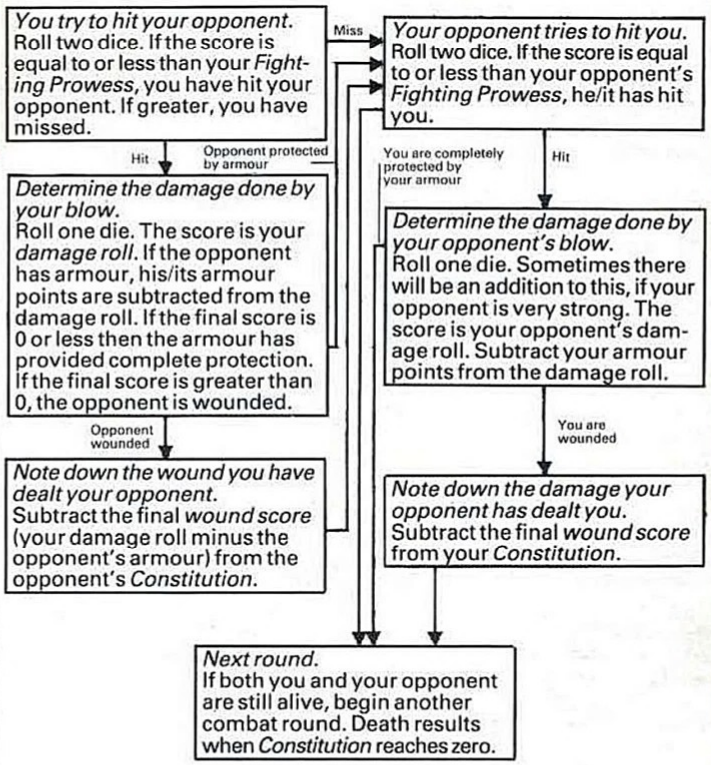
Potions

Other

Combat

When you have to fight, you will be told the opponent's *Fighting Prowess, Constitution* and armour. Note these down before starting the combat.

A fight consists of a number of *combat rounds*. During each round, both you and your opponent get to strike at one another. The sequence for each combat round is as follows:



Keeping Track of Your Characteristics

Keep careful note of your characteristics on your Adventure Record. Your *Constitution* could change quite a bit, as you take wounds in combat or suffer other hardships. Sometimes your other characteristics may change as well. Make a special note of your initial score in each characteristic as (unless you are told otherwise) your score in a characteristic cannot exceed its initial value. If you successfully complete this adventure, you will have a chance to permanently increase one of your characteristics.

Armour

The armour you are wearing reduces the damage you take from a blow. Your opponents will often have armour as well. In the case of monsters, this usually represents their tough skin rather than being actual armour. 1-point armour is leather (or thick hide); 2-point is chainmail (or horny scales, like a dragon's). You start your adventure with chainmail armour, which will absorb 2 points from the damage of any blow that strikes you. Note this down on your Adventure Record.

Equipment

You must note down the equipment you have on your Adventure Record. As well as the chainmail, you have a sword, a dagger, a bow and six arrows, a backpack for holding treasure, a *Potion of Healing* (see below), and 35 gold pieces. Whenever you pick something up during the adventure, note it down on the adventure record.

The Potion of Healing

You start with a flask containing one dose of this potion. When you drink it (which you can do at any time except during a combat), roll one die and add 3. This is the number of *Constitution* points you recover. The potion cannot, however, increase your *Constitution* above its initial score.

Honour

The more chivalrously you behave during the adventure, the more *Honour* you will acquire. Conversely, you lose *Honour* by behaving in an underhand fashion. In many cases it may seem easier to take a dishonourable course of action, but be warned that this could make parts of your subsequent adventures more difficult. You begin with 4 points of *Honour*.▷

The Adventure
You are the Champion of the Greengosh family, chosen by it's head, Hogron. He sent you on a mission to collect some magical boots from a cave, guarded by a great giant, which you slew after many adventures. Now you have returned and, rested and relaxed sufficiently after your ordeal, Hogron has called you to his study. Here he intends to explain the reasoning behind your expedition, and your next task. Go to **1**.

1: 'The Castle of Lost Souls,' Hogron explains, 'is where the demon Slank imprisons the souls of those who pledge themselves to him.' He hands you a glass of brandy. '...One day my father found an ornate bronze jar among his trinkets and wares. Unable to remember where he had got it, he read the inscription on the bottom. Immediately the arch-demon Slank stepped from the shadows!

'After some haggling, my father, concluded a deal with Slank – this was that he should prosper and grow rich in order to leave wealth for his sons and a dowry for his lovely daughter. For this price the demon would have his soul.

'Papa died six months ago. As you can see from this mansion and estates, the demon kept his side of the bargain. While Papa lay on his deathbed, then, Slank waited to take his soul to the Castle. None of us could see Slank, of course, but Papa had told me, his eldest, about the deal. He was rather upset about losing his soul there at the end, but actually I could rather see Slank's point of view – who loves a welcher? Anyhow, just as Papa breathed his last, a single tear fell from the eyes of our sister onto his face. The demon led him through low hills and swamps to where the Castle stands enshrouded by mists. Papa heard the demon chuckle as he closed the door behind them.

Gathering his courage, he turned round and cast the single teardrop into Slank's face. The demon howled in pain and ran off through the Castle, clutching his eye which sizzled and smoked where the tear struck it.

'Papa was no fool...*is* no fool. Seeing that goodness is the means to destroy the evil demon, he barricaded himself in the Castle library and sat down to work out the necessary weapons. The action of killing Slank can be thought of as a spell which requires a crystal ball, a four leaf clover, the ashes of a saint, the hair of a nun, a fragment of the armour of the most chivalrous knight, and a tear from my sister's eyes. Luckily, Papa also discovered a book called *Biodialogos: Speaking With The Living*. He got through to us in a vision and told us to find a champion – that's you – because none of us are adventurers, obviously. He told us where to find the magic boots that are the only means for a living soul to find the Castle. He also checked the company accounts, in fact – he may have popped his clogs, but he's kept his head for business.'

Hogron thinks you should start with the teardrop, since his sister, Perterra Greengosh, is just upstairs in her room. Turn to **9**.

2: You buy them drinks (deduct 3 gold pieces). You recognize them from yesterday's interviews. 'Ah, you're the one who got the Greengosh contract, aren't you,' says one, accepting a cup of wine. Will you ask them if they know where you can get a crystal ball (turn to **6**), or do you mention four leaf clover (turn to **88**)?

3: You wake up in a gutter about midnight, wincing at your terrible hangover. You vaguely remember the gypsies getting you drunk, but after that everything is a total blank. You reach into your money pouch to find they have looted all your cash! Turn to **13**.

4: Curse the luck – you slip on a patch of damp grass and he turns round and sees you! With a single bound he is upon you, sword drawn. You have no choice but to fight.

Chivalrous Knight: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 18; 2-point armour.

If you win, turn to **77**. If you decide to submit, turn to **50**.

5: You go over to the bar and, while the innkeeper is pouring your drink, you reach up to remove the horse brass from the wall. Lose 1 point of Honour. Try to roll your Cleverness or less on two dice. If you succeed, go to **30**. If not, go to **83**.

6: They tell you there is an old hermit outside the town who might well have such an item, as he collects curios and odd artifacts. They will take you to his hut for 5 gold pieces. You could go with them straight away (turn to **27**), or first ask if they know where you can find a four leaf clover (turn to **40**)? If you will not pay their price, you could walk over to the bar and either chat to the innkeeper (turn to **65**) or attempt to pilfer the horse brass you noticed when you came in (turn to **55**).

7: You cross her palm with a gold piece. She gazes into her crystal ball. There she sees much of your past and a little of your future. How much Honour do you have? If it is 4 or more, turn to **49**. If less, turn to **22**.

8: You are scratched and bruised by a rain of blows as you charge for the door. Lose 3 points of *Constitution*. Turn to **73**.

9: Hogron tells one of his brothers to take you to Perterra. You are led up a winding staircase and along a gallery hung with old paintings. The brother guiding you is either surly or half-witted, for he won't answer when you speak to him.

You reach Perterra's room and the brother ushers you inside. You are surprised to see a little girl, no more than four years old. How will you make her cry? Will you: Twist her arm? (turn to **21**) Tell her a joke? (turn to **41**) Tickle her? (turn to **31**) Break her teddy bear's neck? (turn to **51**) Cut up an onion under her nose? (turn to **16**).

10: A Luck Charm may be used *three times only*, so you must keep track of how often you use it. Any time you must make a two-dice roll equal to or less than one of your characteristics, you can activate the Charm instead. Using the Charm means automatic success – you do not need to roll the dice. You must decide *in advance* when you use the Charm; you cannot use it to change a dice roll after you have attempted and failed. Remember it will work only three times only, so use it wisely. Turn to **86**.

11: Perhaps you will have more luck elsewhere. You could approach the adventurers (turn to **2**), the gypsies (turn to **15**) or even the innkeeper (turn to **65**). If you decide to have a go at stealing the horse brass instead, turn to **55**.

12: The lies flow from your tongue like wine from an uncorked bottle, and you soon convince Hogron that your brawl with his brother was the best way to make Perterra cry. In fact, when the brother enters nursing his black eye, Hogron berates him for being so obstructive. Pleased with your easy dishonesty, you head off into town for a lunchtime drink at an inn called The Four Leaf Clover. Turn to **74**.

13: You return to the inn the next day. If you wish to talk to the innkeeper, turn to **65**. If you would rather try to steal the clover-leaf horse brass, turn to **55**.

14: An elegant solution to the problem – as long as you are, in fact, chivalrous. Do you have Honour of 7 or more? If so, a fragment from your own armour will indeed serve the purpose. This is the reward of virtue! Turn to **36**. If your Honour is less than 7, you are not chivalrous enough, and you will have to consider another plan. Turn to **25** and choose again.

15: You take a bottle of wine (which costs 3 gold pieces) over to their table and they start chatting to you. You could try asking them about a crystal ball (turn to **67**) or clover (turn to **19**). Perhaps you could find out if they could introduce you to a fortune teller (turn to **70**).

16: At your suggestion, the brother gets a servant to fetch an onion. You cut it up, and soon the tears are streaming – not only from Perterra's eyes, but also from you and the brother. You collect her tears in a vial, and gain 1 point of Honour for your painless solution to the problem. Turn to **84**.

17: You have failed to obtain the armour fragment and so cannot continue with your adventure. You can roll up a new character and try again, or rejoin the adventure next issue.

18: You pass a group of townsfolk and gypsies gathered in a ring, shouting and

cheering. You stop to see what all the noise is about. There is a tall, thin man with a scarlet bandanna around his head taking coins from the people around him. He is taking bets on a cock fight. You could place a bet yourself (turn to **57**). If you decide to pass by, turn to **69**.

19: 'Why don't you ask the innkeeper?' they suggest. You go over to the innkeeper and inquire about the clover you need. Turn to **65**.

20: You creep off between the brightly coloured pavilions and find a quiet place where you can chip a fragment from the helmet. You then get rid of the helmet by selling it to a trader for 20 gold pieces. Turn to **36**.

21: You grab the little girl's arm and are about to twist it painfully when her enraged brother steps forward and pushes you. You stumble back against the wall. 'Don't you lay a hand on my kid sister,' he snarls. Will you lose your temper and hit him (turn to **61**) or choke back your anger and think of another way to make Perterra cry (turn to **47**)? Either way, lose a point of Honour for being so ungallant.

22: 'Your intentions are clear to me,' she says. 'If you want my crystal ball you must pay more than gold for it...' She pricks your finger with the point of her dagger, and a single drop of blood falls into the silver chalice which she holds out. You find you have lost 1 point of *Constitution* permanentiy! A *Potion of Healing* will not restore this point, and nor will anything else. In exchange for the droplet of blood, she gives you a crystal ball which she takes from a casket behind her. You take it and leave, feeling you have indeed paid dearly for this item. Turn to **43**.

23: The curse takes its effect on you – reduce your *Fighting Prowess* by 1 point *permanently*. Uttering a stream of colourful invective at this unhappy turn of events, you nonetheless make good your escape with the purloined ball. Turn to **43**.

24: As you enter his study, Hogron asks you to explain the thumps and shouts he has heard from his sister's playroom. Roll two dice. If you roll your *Cleverness* or less, turn to **12**. If not, turn to **59**.

25: Now that you have the teardrop, the crystal ball and the four leaf clover, all you need is a fragment of a chivalrous knight's armour. Will you: Try taking a sliver from your own armour? (turn to **14**). Go to the joust being held tomorrow? (turn to **45**). Go to see Wincho the Cleric, who keeps a small private collection of arms and armourat the refectory? (turn to **62**).

26: He offers you a Luck Charm for 20 gold pieces. If you decline this and continue to wander around the fête, turn to **86**. If you buy the Charm, pay him the 20 gold pieces and turn to **10**.

27: They lead you into the woods outside the town, through a little-used pathway. You are beginning to get suspicious. You turn to see one of them drawing his sword as he creeps up on you! He shouts to the others and all three rush in to the attack.

First Adventurer: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 8; 1-point armour.
Second Adventurer: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 7; 1-point armour.
Third Adventurer: *Fighting Prowess*: 4; *Constitution*: 9; 1-point armour.

Every round you must roll for each of them to see if he hits you. You can only hit one of them in any given round. If you feel you must flee, turn to **32**. If you fight them and kill all three, turn to **48**.

28: They order more wine. They are obviously trying to get you drunk. You tell them that you must be leaving soon. You get up from their table. Will you start talking to the innkeeper? If so, turn to **65**. If you'd rather try stealing the horse brass, turn to **55**.

29: You seize the helmet when his back is turned and start to skulk off with it. Roll two dice: If the score is less than or equal to your *Cleverness*, turn to **20**. If the dice score exceeds your *Cleverness*, turn to **4**. Either way you lose 1 point of Honour.

30: You take the brass, put it into a pocket of your tunic, finish your drink and leave the inn. Turn to **25**.

31: Unfortunately she is not ticklish, and carries on playing with her teddy bear. What now? It occurs to you that you could seize the bear and break its neck (turn to **51**) or send down to the kitchens for an onion to cut up in front of her (turn to **16**). If you are really exasperated, you could just twist her arm – in which case, turn to **21**.

32: You cannot fend off all blows as you turn to run. Lose 4 points of Constitution. You make off down the track to town. You do not lose Honour, because you were badly outnumbered. Turn to **52**.

33: Your blood boils and you draw your sword. The Cutpurse tries to duck away between two tents, but a caravan blocks his way and he has to turn and face you:

Cutpurse: *Fighting Prowess*: 4; *Constitution*: 6; 1-point armour.

If you win, turn to **91**.

34: To your dismay, if not complete surprise, they lapse into a drunken rambling and then fall asleep. You get up from the table, annoyed at wasting your money. Turn to **11**.

35: They are very wary of you because you are from out of town, but when you buy them flagons of ale they soon become quite affable. Deduct 3 gold pieces for the drinks. You ask if they know where you could get one of the items you need – the crystal ball (turn to **64**) or the four leaf clover (turn to **82**).

36: By hook or by crook you have obtained the daughter's teardrop, the four leaf clover, the crystal ball and the armour fragment. Gain 1 point of Honour if you have done all this without so far losing any Honour. Only the saint's ashes and the hair of a nun remain to be found – but Hogron suggests that since the town is not a very holy sort of place, you might have more luck finding the last two items en route to the Castle of Lost Souls. You agree and, pulling on the magic boots, you make ready to depart. Turn to **93**.

37: You try to divert her attention, but realize your deceitful words will not fool her. In desperation you hold your sword to her throat and grab the crystal ball. Lose 1 point of Honour. As you turn to make your escape, Gypsy Gayl calls on the spirits of the departed to curse you. Try to roll your *Magical Fortitude* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **68**. If you fail, turn to **23**.

38: The innkeeper tells you that there are sometimes four leaf clovers to be found in the inn's beer garden. 'Why d'ye think it's called *The Four Leaf Clover*?' he laughs. After spending an hour carefully searching the garden, and 2 gold pieces on drinks, you find a four leaf clover! Turn to **25**.

39: After a short and vicious battle, the cock you bet on wins the fight. You get back twice what you bet, less 1 gold piece which the tall man keeps back from each wager. You press on. Turn to **69**.

40: 'Maybe the hermit'll have some,' suggests one of the adventurers. 'Can't say for sure – he collects just about anything.' They take you to meet him. Turn to **27**.

41: You tell a joke which has you and the brother in tears of laughter, but Perterra doesn't even smile. Then you try some amusing antics like pretending to juggle gold coins, but you drop one of your coins and it falls through a chink in the floorboards where you can't get at it. The girl turns away, bored, and you try something else. Do you twist her arm (turn to **21**), tickle her (turn to **31**), grab her teddy bear and break its neck (turn to **51**) or chop up an onion under her nose (turn to **16**)?

42: You climb the steps of the brightly painted caravan, push aside the silk curtain over the doorway, and enter. It is dimly lit. There is a strange herbal smell – incense, perhaps?▷

▷Exotically colourful fabrics hang down in drapes. You feel heady and disorientated, as though you have stepped from the noise and bustle into a different world.

You have several plans, and now you must choose which one to use. Will you ask her to tell your fortune (turn to **7**) – or suggest she reads her own fortune (turn to **90**)? A less honest, but possibly effective, approach would be to try and steal the crystal ball (turn to **56**). You might see if she'd like to join you for a drink and spend some time looking around the fête (turn to **53**).

43: Do you have the four leaf clover as well? If not, turn to **87**. If you have, turn to **25**.

44: You have just filched the brass when you hear a shout: 'Ho, Bimbo. Y've got a thief in yer bar!' Several heavyset men are closing in on you with cudgels and broken bottles. You draw your sword to fight them.

Homp the Blacksmith: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 10.
Klimpi the Tailor: *Fighting Prowess*: 3; *Constitution*: 5.
Torrick the Ruffian: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 6.
Bimbo the Innkeeper: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 7; No armour.

Every round you must roll for each of them to see if he hits you, but you only get the chance to hit one of them at a time. After two combat rounds you see a chance to run for it – if you take this escape route, turn to **8**. If you stay and beat them all, turn to **73**.

45: You walk around the field where the joust is taking place. Amongst the various knights parading back and forth on horseback or cuffing their indolent squires you see very gallant looking knight accepting a maiden's favour. You can tell he must be chivalrous because he only kisses her hand. You approach him. Will you: Explain your quest and why you need a piece of his armour (turn to **72**)? Point out an unsightly dent in his breast plate and offer to rush with it to the armourer so that it can be repaired before the joust begins (turn to **81**)? Try and steal his helmet when he isn't looking (turn to **29**)?

46: You go on for a short distance, then it strikes you that there was something suspicious about the fat man. If you bought a Luck Charm, you find you no longer have it. If you did not buy a Charm, you notice that the money pouch on your belt has been stolen, and the thief has made off with all your cash. Turn to **66**.

47: Keeping a cool head but glaring at the brother with what you hope is a look of threatening malice, you try another tack. Do you assault the little girl's teddy bear (turn to **51**) or cut up an onion under her nose (turn to **16**)?

48: Well fought! You may attempt to increase your *Fighting Prowess* by 1 point, by rolling *more than* your current score on two dice. You check the bodies. You find 15 gold pieces and a *Potion of Healing*. You set off back for town, whistling cheerfully. Turn to **52**.

49: 'I perceive you to be a person of good heart,' she says, smiling at what she sees in her crystal ball. 'I will not deny you what you seek.' She takes a spare crystal ball from a casket behind her and hands this to you. You thank her and leave – but not before she adds that she may have a favour to ask of you someday. Turn to **43**.

50: You drop your sword and ask for quarter. 'Base varlet!' cries the knight, shaking with rage, 'I should spit you like a pig where you stand – but nay, for you have requested mercy, and I would not slay an unarmed foe. Begone!'

You scurry off into the crowds – disgraced...a failure... If you wish to try the adventure again you must roll up a new character. Perhaps your experiences in this incarnation will prove useful in your next?

51: You wrench the teddy bear from her arms and break its neck. She bursts into a flood of tears and kicks you hard in the shins. Undaunted by this or the loss of 1 point of Honour, you collect the precious tears in a vial. Turn to **84**.

52: You return to the inn. The gypsies are still here. If you wish to join them at their table, turn to **15**. If you now try talking to the innkeeper, turn to **65**. If you prefer a dishonest approach, why not try to pilfer the horse brass in the shape of the clover you seek (turn to **55**)?

53: She if flattered and smiles at you. You leave the caravan together and make your way to a large tent nearby. A few drunken figures – townsfolk and gypsies alike – stand, sit or lie around it. The wine and ale flow freely here. You push your way through the crowds of merrymakers and find a small table, where you ply Gayl with drinks. You spend 5 gold pieces, and soon she relaxes and starts to laugh and joke. A few of the more rowdy customers egg her on to dance for them. Eventually – quite quickly, in fact – she is persuaded and, picking up a tamborine you hadn't noticed before, she slaps it against her thighs and begins an erotic dance. The men all cheer, crowding in a circle around her and clapping their hands. You enjoy a last sip from the wine you've bought, then make a discreet exit. Returning to her caravan, you take the crystal ball and leave the fête. Turn to **43**.

54: You craftily slip the brass into your tunic, coolly finish your drink and stroll out of the inn. Turn to **85**.

55: You stroll casually over to the bar. While the innkeeper is pouring your drink, you surreptitiously reach up to take the horse brass. Lose 1 point of Honour and roll two dice. If you roll your *Cleverness* or less turn to **54**. If not, turn to **44**.

56: Roll two dice, attempting to score your *Cleverness* or less. If you do this, go to **79**. If you roll more than your *Cleverness*, turn to **37**.

57: You can wager up to 3 gold pieces on a proudly strutting bantam or on his opponent, who is larger but has a tattered comb. If you choose the former, turn to **39**. If the latter, turn to **92**.

58: He is insulted by your paltry offer! You will now have to increase your offer by 3 gold pieces to successfully bribe the armourer. If you do this, he does as you ask – turn to **36**. If you cannot or will not increase your bribe, turn to **17**.

59: You mumble some feeble explanation and then the other brother comes in behind you nursing a black eye. Hogron is unconvinced by your excuses and has you thrown out for disturbing his household. Dejected but determined to redeem yourself, you go in search of the clover and the crystal ball. You decide to console yourself with a lunchtime tipple at *The Four Leaf Clover* inn. Turn to **74**.

60: If you offered the armourer 3 gold pieces

or more, he pockets the bribe and shaves off a sliver of armour for you. Turn to **36**. If you offered 2 gold pieces or less, turn to **58**.

61: Your sudden punch catches him unawares, but despite his now bloodied nose he swings back at you. You are in a fistfight, and the brother is obviously a skilled boxer.

Brother: *Fighting Prowess*: 7; *Constitution*: 13; No armour.

Resolve the combat in the usual way. You are not wearing your armour, by the way. If you lose, turn to **71**. If you beat him, turn to **80**.

62: Wincho invites you in and seems to believe your story – that you are a collector and connoisseur of antique armour. He shows you his small but valuable collection, including the suit of plate worn by the valiant and pure knight of legend, Sir Quedri. While the trusting Wincho fetches tea and cakes, you break a splinter from the armour's breastplate. He will never notice its loss. You enjoy his hospitality for a while longer and then take your leave of him. Turn to **36**.

63: Gypsy Gayl has retreated to the back of the caravan. You wipe the gore from your sword on the velvet tablecloth and lift the crystal ball from its stand. When you bid her farewell, she spits on the floor. You leave quickly before she can think of a spell. Turn to **43**.

64: 'Can't say for certain,' says one, 'but another drink could jog our memories.' They all chuckle. If you decide to buy more drinks for them, then deduct 2 gold pieces from your Adventure Record and turn to **34**. If you decide to try one of the other groups, turn to **11**.

65: The innkeeper says that there are sometimes four leaf clovers to be found in the beer garden at the back. '...Hence the name of the inn!' he chuckles. you spend a couple of hours searching the beer garden and eventually find a four leaf clover. You have spent 2 gold pieces on drinks by now. Turn to **85**.

66: You see a young couple by the beer tent – a swarthy gypsy lad and his plump country maid. You ask where you could find someone with a crystal ball. 'You want Gypsy Gayl,' he tells you. 'She's the best fortune-teller for fifty leagues and more.'

He directs you to her caravan. Turn to **42**.

67: As soon as you mention the item you seek, their expressions become guarded. They exchange sly glances as they talk to you. You must roll two dice and attempt to score less than or equal to your *Cleverness*. If you succeed, turn to **28**. If you fail, turn to **3**.

68: You are able to resist her sorcery and make off with the crystal ball. Turn to **43**.

69: You find yourself jostled by an excited crowd of townsfolk. A man in a long purple robe catches your eye. He has been performing conjuring tricks – as you watch, he brushes his fingers together and creates a flare of light and a puff of green smoke. If you decide to pass by, turn to **86**. If you want to wait and buy one of the magical charms he has for sale, turn to **26**.

70: After finishing the wine they take you to the local fête, where they point out Gypsy Gayl's caravan. You approach it, hoping that here you will find a crystal ball for your quest. Turn to **42**.

71: He lays you out with a knockout punch. You wake up to find yourself being carried out of the house of two servants. 'I would sooner have an imbecilic half-orc as my champion,' Hogron tells you, 'than entrust my father's fate to you!' You slink away in disgrace. If you wish to start again, you will need to roll up a new character.

72: He is only too glad to be able to assist you in your noble undertaking, and shaves a sliver from his helmet with the sharp edge of his sword. You also gain 1 point of Honour for your open approach. Turn to **36**.

73: You dash out of the inn and down a side alley. You still have the horse brass in a pocket of your tunic, and you are also fairly sure that none of the people in the bar got a good enough look at you to identify you again later. Turn to **85**.

74: A short walk across town brings you to the inn. As you enter the public room, the first thing you see is a horse brass in the shape of a four leaf clover hanging above the bar. You might try stealling this if you think it will serve your purposes (turn to **55**), or you could ask the innkeeper if he knows where there is some clover to be found (turn to **65**). If you prefer, you could strike up a conversation with some of the customers in the bar. Will you join a group of gypsies (turn to **15**), several farm workers having lunch (turn to **35**) or a trio of adventurers, presumably would-be champions who failed Hogron's interview (turn to **2**)?

75: As you run for the door, Bondek swings the stool leg at the back of your neck. Lose 3 points of *Constitution*. Dazed by the blow, you nonetheless manage to stumble out into the street. Turn to **89**.

76: You spot the fat man trying to cut the strings of your money pouch. Turn to **33**.

77: He lies dead at your feet. You snatch up the helmet and push your way through the astonished onlookers. No one tries to stop you as you have slain this perfect if not gentle knight. You chip off the fragment you require and then throw the helmet into a ditch. Turn to **36**.

78: They shrug. 'Can't help you there.' You go with them to get the clover. Turn to **27**.

79: You inquire as to whether she has any lucky heather for sale. As she goes to the back of the caravan to get some, you scoop up the crystal ball and hastily make an exit. Lose 1 point of *Honour* if you have not lost it all already. Turn to **43**.

80: Your powerful left hook floors the brother, and his little sister bursts into tears. Taking advantage of this, you collect the tears in a vial. You have merely compounded your previous unchivalrous behaviour, and lose another 2 points of *Honour*.

You go back downstairs to Hogron's study. If your *Constitution* is less than its initial value, restore it to normal – you recover much quicker from a fistfight than from sword blows! Turn to **24**.

81: He gives you 2gps for your trouble. Unfortunately, the armourer's tent is nearby and so as you carry the breastplate over you have no chance to steal a fragment. Once inside the tent you try bribing the armourer to take a fragment while he's hammering the dent out. Decide how much you will spend and turn to **60**.

82: 'Don't grow that,' they say. 'It gives th' old cows wind!' They all laugh uproariously. 'Maybe we'd know better if we had another drink, though.' Will you buy them more drinks – at a cost of 2 gold pieces (turn to **34**) or will you take your leave of them (turn to **11**)?

83: You are just putting the brass into your pocket when someone yells: 'Put that back, you lightfingered scum!' There is a crash. You whirl, drawing your sword. A huge man is advancing on you with a broken bottle in one hand and the leg of a stool in the other. As you edge away, the innkeeper comes out from behind the bar with a meat cleaver. You must fight both of them together.

Bimbo the Innkeeper: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 7.
Bondek Bonebreaker: *Fighting Prowess*: 7; *Constitution*: 13; No armour.

Each round, they both roll to hit you but you only roll to hit one of them. After one combat round you have a chance to flee (turn to **75**). If you prefer to stand your ground and manage to beat them both, turn to **89**.

84: You decide that the next two items to get will be the crystal ball and the four leaf clover. You have heard there is an inn called *The Four Leaf Clover* off the market square and this seems as good a place as any to begin the search. Turn to **74**.

85: You hear there is a fête in town. Perhaps you will find someone there who knows where you can get a crystal ball. Turn to **18**.

86: A short, fat man blunders carelessly into you and mutters a vague apology as he brushes past. Roll your *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **76**. If you fail, turn to **46**.

87: You return to the *The Four Leaf Clover*. There are a couple of labourers enjoying a flagon or two of ale. Will you try to steal the horse brass in the shape of a four leaf clover that hangs over the bar (turn to **5**), or will you adopt a more straightforward approach and ask the innkeeper (turn to **38**)?

88: 'Know where you can find some,' one of them replies. 'Pay us 5 gold pieces, say, for the info' and we'll take you there right now.' Will you ask if they know where you can get a crystal ball as well (turn to **78**), or go with them to get the clover (turn to **27**)? You could refuse to pay what they ask, of course. If so, will you start talking to the innkeeper (turn to **65**), or try to steal the clover-shaped brass over the bar (turn to **55**)?

89: You hurry away from *The Four Leaf Clover* with the stolen horse brass in your pocket. Turn to **25**.

90: She glances into her crystal ball and instantly sees your intention to acquire it. She clicks her fingers and two burly gypsies with wide-bladed knives enter the caravan. You cannot get to the door. This is a fight to the death.

First Gypsy: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 9.
Second Gypsy: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 7; No armour.

You can only fight them one at a time – in the cramped caravan, they do not have space to attack you together. If you beat them, turn to **63**.

91: You check the man's pockets and find several pilfered money pouches containing a total of 17 gold pieces. He also wears a carnelian ring in the shape of a skull. Remember to note anything you take on your *Adventure Record*. You find some grass to clean the blood from your sword, then step out from between the tents as if nothing had happened. Turn to **66**.

92: The cock you backed utters its last squawk. You lose your money. The tall man is taking bets on another fight, but you decide to press on. Turn to **69**.

93: You gaze out of the windows of the Greengosh mansion towards the setting sun. In that direction lies the Castle of Lost Souls – but in this world, or the next? What hideous perils await you over the Mungo Hills and the Swamps of Bosh? Can the items you have gathered together really allow you to prevail against the awesome necromancy of the demon Slank?

Find out next issue!□

A four-part fantasy adventure in which you are the hero. If you did not complete last issue's adventure or are playing for the first time, you will now need to roll up a character – go to Getting Started, *below. If you have successfully completed last issue's adventure go to* 1. *You may also increase your Initial Constitution by 1 point. Also if your Honour is at least 3, gain 1 point of Honour.*

THE CASTLE OF LOST SOULS

Part Three: The Demon Road
by Dave Morris and Yve Newnham

GETTING STARTED
This is an adventure like the well-known *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*. Your fate will be determined by the decisions you make – along with a little luck. Read only those numbered paragraphs you are sent to in the text – reading any out of turn may ruin the adventure. You begin by determining your *characteristics*.

1. Roll one die. Add 5 to this number. The total is your *Fighting Prowess*. The higher the score, the better you are at swordplay etc.
2. Roll two dice and add 10. This is your *Constitution*. A high score enables you to resist hardship, disease and poison, and gives you the strength to fight on even when badly wounded.
3. Roll one die and add 5. This is your *Cleverness* – how fast you can think and act in an emergency. Your *Cleverness* helps when you are trying to jump clear of a hidden trapdoor, hide from a pursuer and so on.
4. Roll one die and add 3. Add 1 more if your *Fighting Prowess* is 7 or less. Add 1 if your *Constitution* is 14 or less. This is your *Magical Fortitude*. The higher it is, the better chance you have of resisting the effects of hostile sorcery.

What you have just done is called *rolling up a character*. Note down your scores in each characteristic on the *Adventure Record*.

Adventure Record

Characteristic	*Initial Score*	*Current Score*
Fighting Prowess		
Constitution		
Cleverness		
Magical Fortitude		
Honour		

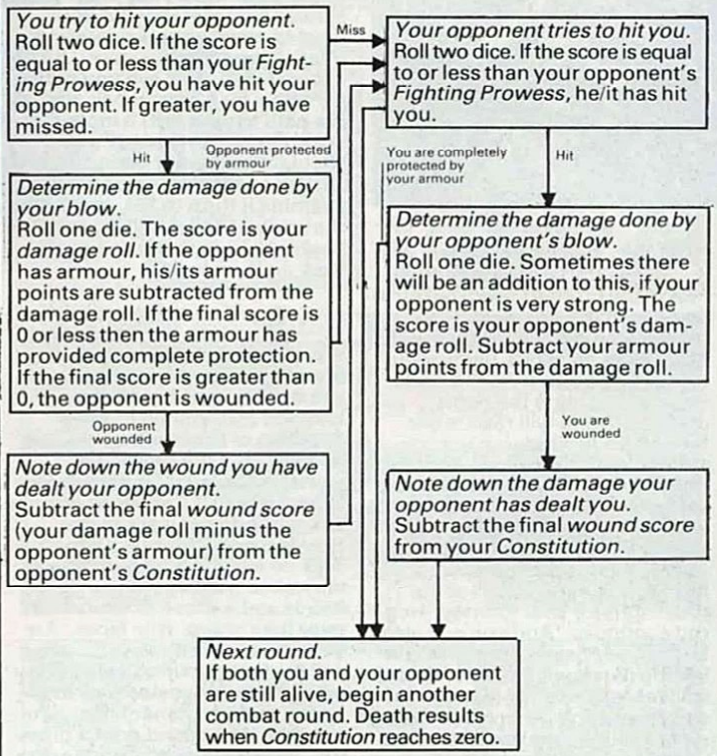
Armour

Gold Pieces

Potions

Other

Combat
When you have to fight, you will be told the opponent's *Fighting Prowess, Constitution* and armour. Note these down before starting.
A fight consists of a number of *combat rounds*. During each round, both you and your opponent get to strike at one another. The sequence for each combat round is as follows:



Keeping Track of Your Characteristics
Keep careful note of your characteristics on your Adventure Record. Sometimes these characteristics, especially *Constitution* will change.

Armour
The armour you are wearing reduces the damage you take from a blow. Your opponents will often have armour as well. In the case of monsters, this usually represents their tough skin rather than being actual armour. 1-point armour is leather (or thick hide); 2-point is chainmail (or horny scales, like a dragon's). You start your adventure with chainmail armour, which will absorb 2 points from the damage of any blow that strikes you. Note this down on your Adventure Record.

Equipment
Note down your equipment on the Adventure Record. As well as the chainmail, you have a sword, a dagger, a bow and six arrows, a backpack for holding treasure, a *Potion of Healing* (see below), a lantern, flint, tinder, 40 gold pieces, magical boots, a teardrop, a fragment of armour, a four leaf clover, and a crystal ball. Whenever you pick something up during the adventure, note it down on the adventure record.

The Potion of Healing
You start with a flask containing one dose of this potion. When you drink it (which you can do at any time except during a combat), roll one die and add 3. This is the number of *Constitution* points you recover. The potion cannot, however, increase your *Constitution* above its initial score.

Honour
The more chivalrously you behave during the adventure, the more *Honour* you will acquire. Conversely, you lose *Honour* by behaving in an underhand fashion. In many cases it may seem easier to take a dishonourable course of action, but be warned that this could make parts of your subsequent adventures more difficult. You begin with 5 points of *Honour*.

The Adventure
You are the Champion of the Greengosh family, chosen by it's head, Hogron. He hired you to rescue his father's soul, captured and taken to the castle of the demon, Slank. To do this Hogron told you that you needed some magical boots, a teardrop, a fragment of armour from the most chivalrous knight, a four leaf clover, a crystal ball, the ashes of a saint and the hair of a nun. These last two items you have yet to collect and are hoping to do so on the journey to the castle. Go to **1.**▷

1: You take breakfast with the Greengosh family. Few of the brothers seem talkative so early in the morning. Some glower from obvious hangovers and one or two stare bemusedly at you as though trying to place your face. 'This is the noble champion who will rescue our father's soul!' declares Hogron suddenly, and everyone sits up. Perterra Greengosh watches you with a look of palpable skepticism which you find disturbing in one so young. The butler brings you your weapons and backpack. 'I have had Mortlake pack some provisions for your journey,' Hogron continues. 'And you will also find in your pack a small pot containing four applications of a magical *Salve of Healing*' (a rather foul smelling preparation made from rancid milk, animal fat and rotting vegetables which actually has remarkable healing properties; spreading it on your wounds after a fight will restore 4 points to your Constitution each time it's used. Note it with your other items on the Adventure Record). Remember, you only have enough for four applications.

You take a few moments to prepare yourself for the great trials that await you. Will you succeed, and live on in legends until the end of time? Or will you sink into the mists of obscurity, lost to some nameless fate in a far-off land? Only the future will tell.

You pull on the magic boots and take up your belongings. Hogron, napkin still in hand, accompanies you as far as the dining room door. 'I wish you good luck in your venture,' he says through a mouthful of toast. 'I can offer you no help or advice save these two snippets of information – first, I have heard that the two principal goblin tribes of the Mungo Hills are the Drans and the Kabbagoos, and that one or the other tribe are inveterate liars. Secondly, it is said that strange phantasms can appear in the mists enveloping the Swamps of Bosh. These phantasms can cause a traveller no hardship as long as he or she disregards them. And now, farewell!'

You leave the Greengosh mansion and make your way to the town's west gate. Somewhere on your journey you must find a saint's ashes and the hair of a nun. But for now all that occupies your mind is that it is a glorious morning and you are about to embark on another challenging adventure. Turn to **42**.

2: Ahead of you the horizon is lost in a blur of mist. Realizing that it will be difficult to find wood to start your campfire in the dank Swamps of Bosh, you start to gather kindling as you descend the trail. As you reach the low-lying moors and marshes of Bosh your progress is slowed considerably, for you have to wend your way around tracts of treacherous mire. Out of the corner of your eye you notice something – a crystal ball, just off the path to your left! It looks unsettlingly like the one you should have in your backpack. Will you go over to this crystal ball to examine it (turn to **25**), check that the original ball is still in your backpack (turn to **53**) or simply walk on (turn to **94**)?

3: You walk on at brisk pace. You are on your way out of the hills by mid-afternoon. Up ahead of you, you see that the trail forks in two. One way will take you on into the Swamps of Bosh (where you are headed), but the other presumably leads to the notorious Dragonbreath Canyon (where you definitely do not want to go). Beside the fork there is a large flat rock on which squat two tiny, shrivelled goblins with large heads and a shock of white hair over their sharp, wily faces. 'Are you a Dran or a Kabbagoo?' you ask the first goblin as you stride up to them. He answers so indistinctly that you cannot hear him, but then the second goblin pipes up: 'He said he's a Kabbagoo. Are you deaf or something?' Ignoring his disrespectful attitude, you demand of the second goblin which route you should take to reach the Swamps of Bosh. 'Swamps of Bosh?' he replies. 'You want to go left.' As you set off, he calls after you: 'Go on, push off to Bosh!' Both goblins start giggling, but you cannot be bothered to go back and teach them a lesson. Will you take the left-hand path (turn to **84**) or the right-hand path (turn to **73**)?

4: He jumps and weaves with confusing speed, and he will be a difficult foe to beat.

Toll Collector: *Fighting Prowess*: 9; *Constitution*: 10; No armour.

If you win, turn to **18**.

5: Your sudden attack surprises the robbers, who took you for a fellow highwayman. You kill one of them with a single blow. Two more are occupied holding the captives, so you have four to fight:

'Headcut' Ahool: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 6; 1-point armour.
Ipcoll the Sour: *Fighting Prowess*: 4; *Constitution*: 6; 1-point armour.
Uknor the Barbarian: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 8; No armour.
Lirripon Drool: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 5; 1-point armour.

All four of them get to strike at you each round. If you drank the potion, however, you can strike back at *three* of them every round! If you actually manage to beat them all, turn to **86**.

6: The mist's fingers poke and pry, stroke and search, around your backpack. You realize that the mist is like an entity – a wraith which creates illusions to try and trick you. You are not fooled. Turn to **30**.

7: After almost an hour you have not got any closer to your destination. It is obviously time to try something else, and you search in your backpack for inspiration. Turn to **72**.

8: It takes real courage to attack a lammasu – no brains, just courage...

Lammasu: *Fighting Prowess*: 10; *Constitution*: 20; fur counts as 1-point armour.

You can escape after three rounds by running off (turn to **44**). If you kill the lammasu, turn to **95**.

9: The man, whose name is Garl, feeds you with a delicious and nourishing stew. The wine he offers is also excellent – nothing like the rough homebrew you had expected. Garl is obviously even more drunk than you thought. He sits in his armchair watching you eat, taking great gulps from his mug and saying things such as 'You are an adventurer who has performed deeds of great credit while I am but a hermit with a dubious past. Yet when we belch, where then is the difference between us?' Finally, noticing you stifle a yawn, he shows you to your room. Will you go to sleep (turn to **46**) or sit up and keep watch (turn to **74**)?

10: You identify some tracks leading to the other side of the valley. Following these, you are led to a sort of shrine. Turn to **90**.

11: You are walking against a freezing wind. You see a darkness on the horizon beyond the castle. The storm will soon engulf you. The whole sky darkens as the clouds billow up from the horizon and white stripes advance to hide the castle from view. Hailstones the size of a man's fist pound down all around you. If you cannot find refuge from the storm quickly you will be pummelled to death! Even the mist disperses, taking shelter wherever it may. One of the tendrils of mist drifts down into the ground where you see a hole like the burrow of a large animal. If it is a burrow you may have to fight its occupant – but that is certainly better than being battered to death by the hailstones. You descend into the hole. Turn to **21**.

12: Roll one die for the damage your arrow does. To bring the Chonchon down you must roll 4 or more – otherwise, although winged, it still manages to fly off (turn to **41**). If you bring it down, turn to **59**.

13: 'Ho there!' he cries, struggling with the fishing rod. 'A fine one has taken the bait this morning, but I need a net before I land him. Will you hold the rod a few minutes while I fetch one from my cottage?' You can do as he asks (turn to **97**) or decline and go on your way (turn to **68**).

14: Four of the robbers see you coming and leave their comrades to massacre the guard while they deal with you. You will have to fight all four at once – they will each get to try and hit you every round. If you drank the potion, you yourself will get three strikes every round (for the duration of this fight only!).

Emaj Dogbreath: *Fighting Prowess*: 3; *Constitution*: 5; 1-point armour.
Ipcoll the Sour: *Fighting Prowess*: 4; *Constitution*: 6; 1-point armour.
'Headcut' Ahool: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 6; 1-point armour.
Uknor the Barbarian: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 8; No armour.

If you beat all four, turn to **79**. If you decide you cannot beat them, you can escape by running off towards the hills (turn to **50**).

15: You open the phial and let the tear fall into your own eye, thinking perhaps that it will show you the true route to the castle. Unfortunately this does not work – and you have now used the teardrop (remove it from your Adventure Record). You grit your teeth and trudge on. Turn to **82**.

16: By the time you reach the tree, the strands of of hair are no longer there. Or perhaps they weren't there in the first place... You continue on your way. Turn to **6**.

17: You step back from the door as Garl's ponderous footsteps approach. You watch as the latch is slowly raised. The door swings open and Garl stands there axe in hand, blinking as his eyes become accustomed to the darkness. With a yell you swing your sword – turn to **64** for the fight; because he is surprised Garl will not get to strike back in the first round.

18: You climb down under the arch of the bridge and search through his belongings. You get 18 Gold Pieces and a magical *Potion of Dazzling Speed*. Note these down on your Adventure Record. After dumping the Toll Collector's body in the river you press on. Turn to **70**.

19: You scramble frantically up the cliff. A voice calls up from below – to your astonishment, the lammasu can talk! 'Look here,' it says, 'for one thing I can jump that high anyway, let alone fly, so you might as well come down. More importantly, I seem to have this bloody great thorn thing stuck right through my paw.' Will you

climb down to help the lammasu (turn to **60**), or stay where you are (turn to **35**)?

20: Lose another point of *Honour* – though you must surely have none left by now! You hide the bodies in a ditch by the side of the road. Gorbran had 9 gold pieces in his belt-pouch – a modest profit, but one which warms your evil heart. You continue on your way. Turn to **66**.

21: The hole is damp, yet it is a great relief to be out of the icy bombardment. You hear a soft squelching. To your horror the surrounding 'walls' are closing in. A liquid oozes from them and trickles down around your feet. Your feet – as you look down to see they are being sucked into the 'mud'. An odour like bile rises about you. You cannot escape, as your legs are trapped and you feel as though the strength is being drawn from you – as a piece of food might feel in an enormous stomach, perhaps! You have only moments in which to act. Desperately you search your backpack for something to use. Will you try using the ashes (turn to **36**), the *Salve of Healing* (turn to **51**), or the teardrop (turn to **77**)?

22: The instant you strike the first spark from your flint, the Marshons rush forward eagerly towards the source of light. You are engulfed by hundreds of slippery, clambering bodies. More and more Marshons surge into the struggling horde, anxious to see the light, and you are soon overwhelmed and crushed by the stampede. Your adventure ends here.

23: You wend your way up to the hut and rap smartly on the door. A small flap opens and a bloodshot eye peers out at you. Then you hear bolts being drawn back and the door is opened by a heavyset man in red and black robes. Seeing you, he smiles and holds up the jug of wine he has in one hand. 'As the sun sinks in its own blood and night strokes the land with fingers of shadow, let us drink together and pass merry comment on the transience of things!' It is clear he has imbibed several jugs of wine already, as he seems to be slurring his words somewhat. Will you accept his offer (turn to **9**) or decline and leave, preferring to camp outside for the night (turn to **33**).

24: It occurs to you that if someone has left fresh flowers by the idol, there may be a religious community nearby. Perhaps you could get one or both of the items you need? Roll two dice, attempting to score less than or equal to your *Cleverness*. If you succeed, turn to **10**. If you fail, turn to **76**.

25: A bank of mist rolls in front of you. You walk forward through the mist but cannot find the crystal ball anywhere. Somewhat perplexed, you decide to return to the path and continue on. Turn to **94**.

26: You have fallen victim to a spell of blood thinning! In future, whenever you are wounded you must deduct 1 extra point from your *Constitution*. Whilst you bemoan your ill-luck, the detestable chonchon shrieks with laughter and flies off into the mists. Turn to **41**.

27: You trek on towards the castle, but every time you glance away from it you look up to find it is in a different location. Nor do you seem to be getting any closer. You decide to try one of your items. Turn to **72**.

28: The gods do not want their shrine sullied by the likes of you. They send one of their servants – a huge, halberd-wielding warrior clad in white armour who steps from a shining rent in the air in front of you. You are so taken aback by his sudden and miraculous appearance that you do not get to strike back on the first round. After that the fight proceeds normally.

Angel Executioner: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 14; 2-point armour.

If you beat him, he turns into a stream of clear water and flows away. Turn to **39**.

29: You help the robbers to kill the last guard. Lose 1 point of *Honour*. One or two of the robbers start pushing the old man around while the rest go over to look at the palanquin. You hear a shriek and they bundle a white-robed damsel with long black hair out onto the road. One of the robbers shouts out that the old man has only a few gold pieces. 'In that case,' snarls the leader, spitting into the dust, 'we'll have to entertain ourselves as best we can, won't we, lads?' You are not quite sure what to do now. You can attack the robbers and try to help the old man and the girl escape (turn to **96**) or simply slink away while the robbers enjoy their 'entertainment' (turn to **66**).

30: Since it is now getting late you start to look around for somewhere to make camp. You soon find a patch of high ground and get a fire going with the wood you collected earlier. After a light supper you settle down and go to sleep.

You come awake sudddenly. Hours have passed – the fire is just glowing embers now. Creatures are stirring in the darkness all around you. Slowly you sit up. Your camp is surrounded by hordes of Marshons. These are small, hairless, leathery creatures with webbed hands and large, lidless eyes. They have been attracted by your fire and the starlight glinting off your sword, stuck in the ground beside you. They move around you like moths around a candle. From what you have heard, they eat only fungus and swampweed – but nonetheless you are in the most deadly peril from them for, if they press forward towards the light which has attracted them, you will be smothered and crushed by the countless hundreds of them. What will you do? You could toss your sword away in the hope that they will scurry after it (turn to **93**), or light your lantern (turn to **22**) or – if you have one – you could use your *Ring of Light* (turn to **67**).

31: He scratches the back of his neck. 'Don't know about the strand of hair,' he says after some thought – 'don't nuns shave their heads when they enter a convent, anyway? But there is a sort of shrine not too far from here where some old holy man was buried. Maybe he was a saint.' He gives you directions and you set off in search of the shrine. Turn to **90**.

32: The creatures attacking you are chonchons. These disembodied heads fly using their large veined ears as wings and attack by biting with their chisel-like teeth. Three of them fly in to engage you:

First chonchon: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 8; No armour.
Second chonchon: *Fighting Prowess*: 4; *Constitution*: 4; No armour.
Third chonchon: *Fighting Prowess*: 7; *Constitution*: 5; No armour.

They will each get to strike at you every round, but you can only attempt to hit one at a time – unless you drank the magic potion, in which case you can attempt three blows a round for the rest of this combat. If a chonchon is down to 2 or fewer points of *Constitution* at the end of any round, it will fly up out of combat. If you are still fighting at least one of the chonchons after four rounds, turn to **65**. Otherwise turn to **91**.

33: You spot a niche in the ridge and scramble up the slope to it. The ledge is quite wide, and you are able to comfortably stretch out on it. You decide it is a good place to spend the night – wolves and the like will be unable to reach you. You awaken early the next morning. Add 3 *Constitution* points for your rest. You gather your belongings and continue onwards. Turn to **68**.

34: You stumble on, only to trip over a clump of turf and fall flat on your face in the mud. Picking yourself up, you scowl, set your jaw and start trudging doggedly towards the distant castle. You decide to look for inspiration in your backpack. Turn to **72**.

35: 'You're being remarkably unhelpful,' says the lammasu coolly. 'I mean to say, why do you humans have to be so preposterously timid, anyway?' It walks off as proudly as its limp will allow. After some time you decide it's safe to lower yourself to the ground and go on. Turn to **3**.

36: You empty the ashes into the 'hole' and, with a sound very like a cough, it spits you out into the open. Luckily the hailstorm has now passed. Turn to **27**.

37: You clamber through the bedroom window and escape into the night. You trek for several miles with only the wan moonlight to guide you. When you stop to check your belongings, you are distressed to find that you left behind half your cash in the hurry to get away. Deduct this from the gold on your Adventure Record. Cold, tired and impoverished you drift into a restless slumber and awake early the next morning. Turn to **68**.

38: On a plinth in front of the idol, which depicts the god Lurga during his thirty-seventh Tribulation, you find a vase containing fresh flowers. You should note these down on your Adventure Record if you decide to take them. Will you now carry on towards the Mungo Hills (turn to **71**), place an offering of gold on the plinth (turn to **48**), or investigate further (turn to **24**)?

39: You reach into the silvery glow and take the urn. Peeking within, you see that it contains a handful of ashes. You put the urn in your backpack and set off again. Turn to **71**.

40: Norwena runs off shrieking. You roll Gorbran's body into a ditch – discovering 9 gold pieces in his belt-pouch as you do so – and continue on your way. Turn to **66**.

41: You continue on for some time but you still do not seem to be getting any closer to your objective. Perhaps the crystal ball will prove of use now? You take it from your backpack. Turn to **98**.

42: You set out at a brisk pace and soon leave the fields and meadows around the town far behind. After some time you come to a river and, seeing a bridge only a few hundred yards away, you walk along the bank to it. As you are about to cross the bridge, however, a tall slender man in grey robes appears from under the arch of the bridge and calls up to you that you must pay a toll of 4 gold pieces to cross here. Will you pay him the money (turn to **52**), or will you ignore him and cross anyway (turn to **62**)?

43: A small band of robbers has attacked a group of travellers. Two guards lie dead in the road and a third is battling against impossible odds to prevent the robbers from getting at the palanquin he was accompanying. You see an old man with a staff cowering beside the palanquin. Will you: Help the guard and the old man? (turn to **45**). Help the robbers? (turn to **29**). Avoid getting involved at all? (turn to **63**).

44: The lammasu swipes at you as you turn to flee – roll one die to determine the damage done by its raking claws. Your armour protects you from this as usual. If you are still alive, you run off. For some reason the lammasu does not pursue you. Turn to **3**.▷

45: If you have a *Potion of Dazzling Speed* there is time to drink it now before you engage the robbers. Considering the odds you face, it may well be a good idea – but of course, perhaps you'd rather save it for when you face the demon... Decide, and then turn to **14**.

46: You awaken with a start, instantly aware of danger. You hurl yourself to one side just as an axe crashes down. A fraction slower and your head would have been split like firewood! You find your sword. Facing you in the half-light is Garl, wielding the massive axe as though it were a toothpick. You have removed much of your armour in order to sleep more comfortably – it will only absorb 1 point of damage from Garl's blows in this fight. Turn to **64**.

47: You hastily nock an arrow onto your bow and take aim at the retreating chonchon leader. To hit it, you must roll your *Fighting Prowess* or less on two dice. You have one chance to do this before the chonchon is out of range. If you hit, turn to **12**. If you miss, turn to **41**.

48: Deduct the amount you decide to leave from your current gold. You utter a short prayer to Lurga in which you compare your current adventure to his ninth Tribulation. There is no response from the god. Will you now carry on towards the hills (turn to **71**), or investigate further (turn to **24**)?

49: As you step towards the urn, a shower of glittering particles forms a cloud in front of you. This rapidly coalesces to form a warrior in shining white armour who advances to attack you.

Angel Knight: *Fighting Prowess: 7; Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour.

If you beat him, he vanishes like mist. Turn to **39**.

50: The robbers quickly give up the chase and go back to loot their victims. You press on briskly towards the setting sun, determined to put several miles between you and the robbers. Turn to **66**.

51: You drop your remaining supply of the *Salve* into the 'hole', which is unimpressed by the substance's foul taste and hurriedly spits you out into the open air. The hailstorm has now passed. Turn to **27**.

52: You throw the four coins down to him and he pockets them. You can now continue on your way (turn to **70**) or ask him if he knows where you can get the last two items you need (turn to **31**).

53: As you open your backpack a thick bank of fog engulfs you, obscuring your vision for a moment. When you look into the pack, you find that the items you have collected to deal with the demon have gone! What will you do now – go back and tell Hogron that the mists stole your equipment (turn to **80**) or walk on (turn to **88**)?

54: The girl throws up her arms to the heavens with a howling scream. The skies answer with a thunderous rumble, and you see lightning flash between the clouds. Seeing the power of her prayer, the robbers turn and flee. She goes over to the old man and obviously find he is still alive, for she revives him with a simple *healing* spell. They come over to you and the girl tells you that her name is Norwena and the old man is Gorbran. They and their guards were on their way to the convent of the Sisters of Pure Adoration when the bandits attacked. Since they now lack guards, you agree to escort them – Norwena admits that her prayer-magic looks more impressive than it actually is, and a skilled swordsman might come in handy. Turn to **61**.

55: As you walk on, a few tendrils of mist return to swirl about you. You do not mind now – the mist is like an old travelling companion.

Then, in the distance, you see the Castle of Lost Souls. It cannot be more than a few miles away! However, when you look up again after going only a few hundred yards, you find that the castle is no longer straight ahead of you! You walk towards it for almost an hour, keeping your eyes on it the whole time, but you do not seem to be getting any closer. Presumably the demon Slank has set enchantments around his castle to keep unwelcome visitors away, so what will you do now? You could just continue marching towards the castle, keeping your eyes on it continually so it does not change location again – turn to **11**. Or you could use an item from your backpack – turn to **72**. If you would like to try something else, turn to **83**.

56: You are in a sacred place. The gods look into your heart and see your past actions. If your *Honour* is 7 or more, turn to **39**. If your *Honour* lies between 1 and 6, turn to **49**. If you have no *Honour*, turn to **28**.

57: Since Norwena must have her head shaved anyway when she joins the Order, the Mother Superior is happy to give you a long, black strand of hair. You put this in your backpack and continue your journey westwards. Turn to **75**.

58: You ransack his home in search of treasure he may have looted from travellers. You find a *Potion of Healing*, a *Ring of Light* and 4 gold pieces. Under the floorboards you are also revolted to discover human bones from over thirty bodies, neatly arranged in boxes with notes on the quality of the meal each person provided. You pass the rest of the night in a fitful sleep full of harrowing nightmares and depart this dreadful place before the sun is up. Turn to **68**.

59: You walk over to where the chonchon leader has fallen. The arrow has torn its ear but it is still alive and thrashing. You grind it into the mud with your boot. Noticing a gold ring through its left ear, you take out your dagger and cut this free. The ring is large enough to fit around your wrist and is in fact a *Wristband of Lightning*. Note this down on your Adventure Record and turn to **41**.

60: 'Awfully decent of you,' says the lammasu as you draw the thorn from its paw. 'Rather embarrassing really – can't think how I came to tread on the damned thing! If you're heading west let me give you some advice. There are two tribes of goblins in these hills – the Drans and the Kabbagoos. You can never tell the difference between them because they mix freely and wear the same outlandish clothes. The only thing is that the Drans always tell the truth and the Kabbagoos always lie. I hope that's of some help to you.' After thanking you again, the lammasu takes its leave of you. Gain 1 point of *Honour* for helping this noble beast. Turn to **3**.

61: It occurs to you that if you escort them to the convent, the Sisters will probably be quite happy to give you a few strands of nun's hair. If you decide to do this turn to **69**. Of course, if you are the treacherous sort you could just grab the damsel right now and shear her hair off (in which case, turn to **89**).

62: With astonishing speed and agility he leaps up and lands on the bridge in front of you. As he does so, he draws a long curved sword from the scabbard slung across his back. 'The fine for non-payment of the toll is 9 gold pieces,' he says with a wry smile. 'And the penalty for non-payment of the *fine* is...' He glances significantly at the gleaming blade of his sword. Will you now pay him 9 gold pieces (turn to **87**), or do you prefer to fight (turn to **4**)?

63: You leave the road and sneak around the commotion. You continue on into the hills. Turn to **66**.

64: You realize that Garl is not a human being at all, but a cold-hearted Ogre hungry for your flesh!

Ogre: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 13; No armour.

Because of his great strength, add 1 point to the die when rolling the damage for his blows. If you beat him, turn to **58**.

65: The fourth chonchon, which has been hovering over you watching the fight, now starts to beat its ears furiously and fly off across the marsh. If you defeat any remaining chonchons within two rounds (refer back to **32** if you can't remember their characteristics) you can try to bring down the escaping leader with an arrow – turn to **47**. If the combat goes on for longer than two rounds then the leader is out of bowshot – if you kill or drive off the remaining chonchons after that, turn to **41**.

66: Night is closing in as you enter the rolling, dusty landscape of the Mungo Hills. High on a ridge you see a ramshackle hut with a narrow, twisting path leading up to it. You can go and seek shelter for the night at the hut (turn to **23**) or else make camp out here in the open (turn to **33**).

67: You hold up the ring and cause it to emit a brilliant flash. The Marshons clutch at their eyes and fall back, whimpering, blinded by the light. They scurry off into the safety of the night. Turn to **78**.

68: About mid-morning you are just passing between two hills when you come face-to-face with a lammasu – a winged lion with an almost human face! However, it makes no immediate move to attack. You recover from your moment of petrifaction and consider your next action. Will you draw your sword and fight it (turn to **8**), climb the cliff out of its reach (turn to **19**) or wait for it to move (turn to **85**)?

69: You escort Gorbran and Norwena safely to the convent. The Sisters of Pure Adoration are very grateful. If you have any wounds, they use their healing magics (restore your *Constitution* to its Initial score) and if you are subject to a curse they will

lift it for you. They give you a hearty meal and a comfortable bed for the night. In the morning, will you continue on your journey (turn to **75**), or will you first ask them for a nun's hair (turn to **57**)?

70: The path up into the Mungo Hills takes you along a valley. As you walk, you notice a stone idol down in the valley. Will you detour to inspect it (turn to **38**), or carry on along the path (turn to **71**)?

71: You trudge on for many miles. It is late in the afternoon and the sun is dipping towards the rolling Mungo Hills ahead of you. You are just estimating whether you will be into the hills by nightfall when you see a skirmish of some kind some distance away. Will you go closer to investigate (turn to **43**), or will you go out of your way to avoid getting involved (turn to **63**)?

72: Which of your items will you use? Perhaps the four leaf clover (turn to **92**), the little girl's teardrop (turn to **15**) or the gypsy's crystal ball (turn to **98**)

73: The trail takes you down out of the hills. Increase your Initial *Cleverness* score 1 point. Turn to **2**.

74: After two hours or so you are almost nodding off when a slight noise jerks you awake. You creep over to the bedroom door and peer through the keyhole. Garl is moving around laying the table for a meal. After putting out a fork and long sharp knife he comes to your door. You realize he is about to listen at the keyhole, so you pretend to snore. He turns away from the door. Peering out again, you see he is taking a huge axe out of a cupboard! Will you gather your things and make a getaway via the bedroom window (turn to **37**), or draw your sword and get ready to fight him if he comes in (turn to **17**)?

75: It is a fine morning and you enjoy your walk up into the rolling landscape of the Mungo Hills. After a little while you come to a stream where a burly man sits fishing. Will you greet him (turn to **13**), or pass by (turn to **68**)?

76: You cannot find any tracks to support your theory. With a shrug you turn away from the idol and press on towards the hills. Turn to **71**.

77: You open the phial and tip out the teardrop, but to no effect. You can feel the stinging secretion on the walls eating into your skin. Will you now use the ashes (turn to **36**) or the *Salve of Healing* (turn to **51**)?

78: You drift back off to sleep and pass the rest of the night in comfort – apart from the clouds of gnats and the occasional faroff howl of moorland monsters. You wake at dawn. Add 2 points to your *Constitution* for the rest. You eat a hearty breakfast and then press on deeper into Bosh. Turn to **55**.

79: Seeing you defeat four opponents single-handed, the remaining robbers turn tail and flee. Gain 2 points of *Honour* for your dashing rescue of the damsel who now steps out of the palanquin. Her expression registers a momentary disapproval at your bloodied and travel-soiled appearance. Then she smiles and thanks you for your intervention. The old man gets up, retrieves his staff and walks over to you. You glance at the guard who was valiantly fighting on to protect the palanquin, but you see that the robbers managed to slay him. The old man explains that he is Gorbran, a servant of the Sisters of Pure Adoration. He was escorting the damsel – whose name is Norwena – back to the convent, where she is to be initiated into the Holy Order. Since they now lack guards for their journey, you can accompany them. Turn to **61**.

80: You make your way back up into the Mungo Hills. The two goblins are very amused to see you returning – so much so that one of them declares between giggles that he is a Kabbagoo. You travel on eastwards and, late in the afternoon of the second day, you arrive back at the town. Hogron is furious. He berates you for your incompetence in losing all the items and finally dismisses you. Your reputation in tatters, you gather your belongings and leave town. You have failed.

81: You resist the spell's effect. Seeing this, the chonchon snarls and starts to fly away. You can try to bring it down with an arrow. Turn to **47**.

82: As you go on a soft, low beating comes across the bleak moors. You listen to the sound and it seems to form words – *slay, slay, slay*...

You look up to see four dark shapes swooping down through the mist towards you. If you have a *Potion of Dazzling Speed*, there is time to drink it now before you are attacked. Cross it off your Adventure Record if you do. Then turn to **32**.

83: You could try heading for the castle by an indirect route, either to the right or left of where it actually seems to be (turn to **7**). You could try closing your eyes and heading on blindly in the direction you last saw it (turn to **34**). Or you could use an item from your backpack (turn to **72**).

84: You proceed along the trail, hoping that you have made the correct choice and that you will soon be in the Swamps of Bosh. Just then, a rumbling comes from below your feet. The ground shakes and great fissures and cracks appear across the path. You fall and are engulfed by scalding steam that issues out of the depths of the earth. You cannot see, and when you try to cry out the steam sears your throat. You have taken the trail leading to Dragonbreath Canyon, but you will never live to reach that terrible place. Your adventure ends here.

85: The lammasu holds up its paw to show you that there is a large thorn stuck right through it. Then, to your amazement, the lammasu speaks: 'Um, I seem to have this thorn...' You realize that the poor creature means no harm and decide to help it. Turn to **60**.

86: The remaining two robbers let their captives go. The old man starts to hobble away, only to be felled by a throwing knife in the back. The girl drops to her knees, apparently crying. 'Quite impressive,' growls the leader, referring to your swordplay. 'I've seen better,' replies his equally laconic accomplice.

Black Rat: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; 1-point armour.
Fafnir: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 13; 1-point armour.

You will have to fight them both at once. If you drank the potion it has now worn off. If you are still alive after two combat rounds, turn to **54**.

87: You grudgingly hand him 9 gold pieces. You can now continue on your way (turn to **70**) or ask him if he knows where you could find the two items you need (turn to **31**).

88: You have gone on only about a hundred yards when you suddenly come upon all your missing equipment. It is lying in a neat pile directly in front of you. Delighted at this happy change in your fortune, you gather up the items before continuing on your way with a spring in your step and a merry tune on your lips. Turn to **6**.

89: You seize Norwena and draw your sword to cut her long black tresses. Gorbran thinks you are attacking her and jumps on your back. You shake him off, but he hits his head on a rock and lies very still. Norwena starts screaming and you have to hit her quite hard to shut her up. Lose 1 point of *Honour*. You cut off Norwena's hair and put it in your backpack with other items. If you consider Gorbran a saint you can also burn him and collect the ashes. Will you now release Norwena (turn to **40**) or kill her as well (turn to **20**)?

90: The shrine consists simply of a marble dome supported by three thick pillars. Within, on a table of rock, you can see a verdigris-stained urn. As you step between the pillars a silvery light appears out of nowhere to halo the urn. If you wish to stay, turn to **56**. You can flee to the hills, in which case turn to **71**.

91: Hovering directly above your head, the fourth chonchon glares down. '*Nemo me impune lacessit*!' it hisses. It is obvious that it is not wishing you well, because the next moment you feel a hostile spell closing around you. Try to roll your *Magical Fortitude* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **81**. If not, turn to **26**.

92: Some people claim that a four leaf clover placed under the tongue prevents one from speaking anything but the truth. But what use is such an old wives' tale to you now? You replace the clover in your backpack and trudge on in the direction you imagine the castle to be. Turn to **82**.

93: You hurl your sword away and the Marshons scurry after it. They seize the gleaming object and carry it off. As they recede into the night you can hear their shrill, bubbly voices disputing ownership of this new prize. You are safe, but from now on you will have to use a dagger instead of a sword in combat, so all your damage rolls must be reduced by 1 point. Turn to **78**.

94: Just ahead of you, draped over the gnarled branches of a tree, are several strands of long black hair. Could they be nun's hairs? You could open your backpack (turn to **53**), go over to the tree (turn to **16**) or ignore it and walk on (turn to **6**).

95: You step past the lammasu's body. As you do so, you notice a large thorn stuck right through its paw. Just as well you killed it – it was probably in a vile temper and might have attacked someone. Turn to **3**.

96: Do you have a *Potion of Dazzling Speed*? If so, you would be well advised to drink it before attacking the robbers. Remember to cross it off your Adventure Record if you do so. Now turn to **5**.

97: You take the rod from him and soon find that you are barely able to hold onto it – the fish is putting up quite a struggle. Soon the big man returns with a net and takes the rod. With a mighty effort he draws up a spined, vicious looking fish the size of a large dog. 'Quite a whopper!' says the man, showing a set of sharp white teeth as he grins. 'How rare to find a person in these days of selfishness and antagonism who is prepared to lend a hand to a fellow creature! Allow me to offer my *Ring of Light* as a gift for your magnanimity. Moreover, and as a special favour to you, today I shall dine on fish.'

You are not quite sure what he means, but you take the magical ring and thank him before going on your way. Turn to **68**.

98: When you gaze at the castle through the crystal ball, a shimmering path of green light is visible leading through the swamp. Holding the crystal ball in front of you, you make your way along the path. You have been walking for only a few minutes, intent on the ground diretly in front of you, when you notice a dark shape looming ahead. You glance up from the crystal ball and almost drop it in shock. You are at the castle gates.

A mixture of luck and skill has brought you to the terrible Castle of Lost Souls. You stand where no living person has ever stood.

But have you the courage to enter...? Find out next issue!□

A four-part fantasy adventure in which you *are the hero. If you did not complete last issue's adventure or are playing for the first time, you will now need to roll up a character – go to* Getting Started, *below. If you have successfully completed last issue's adventure go to* 1.

THE CASTLE OF LOST SOULS

Part Four: The Evil Eye
by Dave Morris and Yve Newnham

GETTING STARTED
This is an adventure like the well-known *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*. Your fate will be determined by the decisions you make – along with a little luck. Read only those numbered paragraphs you are sent to in the text – reading any out of turn may ruin the adventure. You begin by determining your *characteristics*.

1. Roll one die. Add 5 to this number. The total is your *Fighting Prowess*. The higher the score, the better you are at swordplay etc.
2. Roll two dice and add 10. This is your *Constitution*. A high score enables you to resist hardship, disease and poison, and gives you the strength to fight on even when badly wounded.
3. Roll one die and add 5. This is your *Cleverness* – how fast you can think and act in an emergency. Your *Cleverness* helps when you are trying to jump clear of a hidden trapdoor, hide from a pursuer and so on.
4. Roll one die and add 3. Add 1 more if your *Fighting Prowess* is 7 or less. Add 1 if your *Constitution* is 14 or less. This is your *Magical Fortitude*. The higher it is, the better chance you have of resisting the effects of hostile sorcery.

What you have just done is called *rolling up a character*. Note down your scores in each characteristic on the *Adventure Record*.

Adventure Record

Characteristic	*Initial Score*	*Current Score*
Fighting Prowess		
Constitution		
Cleverness		
Magical Fortitude		
Honour		

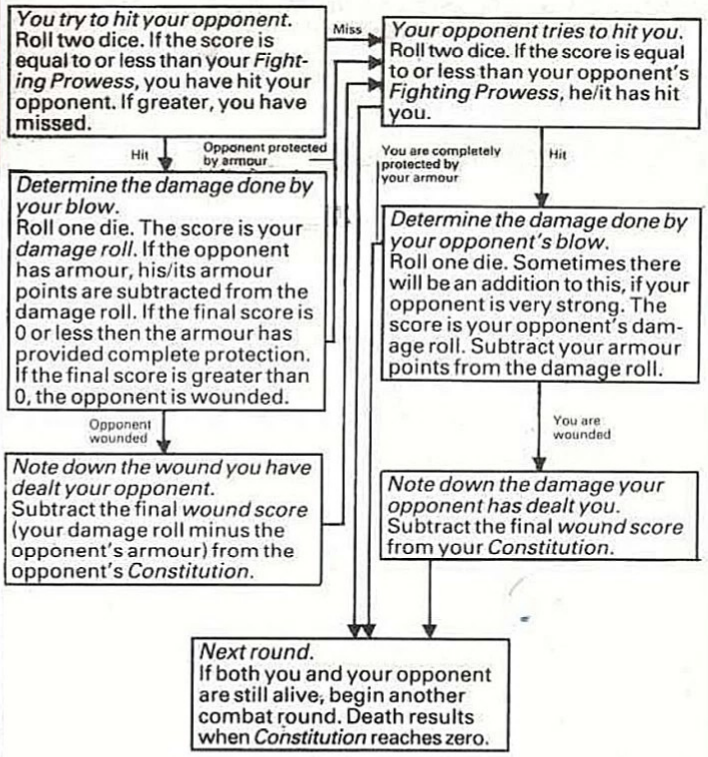
Armour

Gold Pieces

Potions

Other

Combat
When you have to fight, you will be told the opponent's *Fighting Prowess, Constitution* and armour. Note these down before starting.
A fight consists of a number of *combat rounds*. During each round, both you and your opponent get to strike at one another. The sequence for each combat round is as follows:



Keeping Track of Your Characteristics
Keep careful note of your characteristics on your Adventure Record. Sometimes these characteristics, especially *Constitution* will change.

Armour
The armour you are wearing reduces the damage you take from a blow. Your opponents will often have armour as well. In the case of monsters, this usually represents their tough skin rather than being actual armour. 1-point armour is leather (or thick hide); 2-point is chainmail (or horny scales, like a dragon's). You start your adventure with chainmail armour, which will absorb 2 points from the damage of any blow that strikes you. Note this down on your Adventure Record.

Equipment
Note down your equipment on the Adventure Record. As well as the chainmail, you have a sword, a dagger, a bow and six arrows, a backpack for holding treasure, a *Potion of Healing* (see below), a lantern, flint, tinder, 40 gold pieces, magical boots, a little girl's teardrop, a fragment of a chivalrous knight's armour, a four leaf clover, a saint's ashes, a crystal ball, and a nun's hair. Whenever you pick something up during the adventure, note it down on the adventure record.

The Potion of Healing
You start with a flask containing one dose of this potion. When you drink it (which you can do at any time except during a combat), roll one die and add 3. This is the number of *Constitution* points you recover. It cannot, however, increase *Constitution* above its initial score.

Honour
The more chivalrously you behave during the adventure, the more *Honour* you will acquire. Conversely, you lose *Honour* by behaving in an underhand fashion. You begin with 7 points of *Honour*.

The Adventure
You are the Champion of the Greengosh family, chosen by its head, Hogron. He hired you to rescue his father's soul, captured and taken to the castle of the demon, Slank. To do this Hogron told you that you needed some magical boots, a teardrop, a fragment of armour from the most chivalrous knight, a four leaf clover, the ashes of a saint and the hair of a nun. All these items you have collected in your journeys and have already undergone many hardships to reach the castle of Slank. Go to **1**.

1: You stand at the very threshold of the Castle of Lost Souls. The mists of the swamp seem to shrink away from it. Its presence is awesome – you cannot grasp any sense of its size; it seems endless, eternal... The walls tower dizzyingly above you into the glowering, dull red sky. Perhaps in the castle's unreal and inhuman architecture you glean something of the twisted mind of its master, Slank. You notice a twinkling light. A solitary candle burns in one of the windows – to the left of the doorway, apparently on the first floor. All else is shrouded in darkness.

The castle is not guarded; none of the tortured souls that enter ever leaves. With weapon in hand you advance slowly across the drawbridge. You reach out – does your hand tremble just a little now? – and push open the heavy mahogany door. Turn to **12**.

2: After a short distance the corridor turns to the right. At the corner there is a low, fire-blackened door with a pewter handle. If you wish to open the door, turn to **73**. If you wish to ignore it and carry on, turn to **6**.

3: You dip your hand into the pool and take the stone bottle. Will you remove the stopper from it? If so, turn to **63**. If not, note it down and turn to **44**.

4: Your eyes are off him for only a moment as you reach for your backpack, but when you look again he is no longer there. Strange and inexplicable things are obviously commonplace here – you will have to be vigilant. You turn back; go to **41**.

5: You double up in sudden and intense agony. For long minutes you crouch there by the fire, incapacitated by the terrible pain. At last you are able to rise, but you have permanently lost a point from your Initial *Constitution*. You can now open the larder (turn to **22**) or go through to the next room (turn to **58**).

6: A little further along the corridor you come to a large oak portal with an iron latch in the shape of a bat. You push it open and survey the room beyond. Directly opposite is a high arch leading from the room. Staring down from above this arch is a rather noxious bas relief of a sneering inhuman face.

A low whimpering draws your attention to the occupant of the room – presumably one of the poor souls Slank torments for his pleasure. She is a slender woman with light brown hair, her wrists bound by leather thongs to a wooden beam above her head. Her feet rest on a red-hot metal plate. You can see the sick ingenuity of the arrangement – she is able to lift her legs clear of the plate, but eventually her arms ache so much that she has to stand on it again and get burned. She sees you and starts pleading for you to release her. If you do, turn to **53**. If not, turn to **37**.

7: Did you leave either the clover or the teardrop on Slank's mask? If so, turn to **75**. If not, turn to **43**.

8: You could try to heat the knife using your lantern, which might help to cut the ice. If you do that, turn to **86**. If you have a jar of salt, go to **55**.

9: You find a twisting flight of steps leading up out of the dungeon. To your immense relief, the door at the top is not locked and you emerge into the candlelit entrance hall. You decide to try the stairs – turn to **34**.

10: It is exhausting work, but you eventually manage to dig the mask out of the ice. Turn to **35**.

11: The rauchwurm dissipates into the smoke from which it formed. You reach out and grasp the golden hilt of the sword you have fought for. Certainly it is a worthy prize: as you swing it through the air it follows your intentions with an almost sentient precision. You add 1 to your *Fighting Prowess* while fighting with this weapon. Seeing nothing else of value in the room, you decide to leave – and you are incidentally saved from electrocution a second time by your magic Wristband. Turn to **6**.

12: You step into a shadowy, cloistered hallway that reeks of funeral incense. All is bathed in the guttering, smoky light of myriad black candles. A wide staircase leads up to the first floor. Over to one side of the hallway you see double doors carved with arabesque designs. Will you open the doors (turn to **49**), or proceed up the stairs (turn to **34**)?

13: You walk along a short tunnel and enter a circular room with a pool in the middle. There is one other exit from the room – a door to your left. You can go back and take one of the other doors – either the one with the copper plaque (turn to **88**) or the one with the bronze plaque (turn to **70**) – or you can cross the room (turn to **83**).

14: You leave the newt's eye in the eyeslit of the demon mask. There seems to be nothing else you can do here, so you cross the icy floor to the archway and step through. Turn to **18**.

15: You gulp back the magic potion. For the duration of your fight with the Undine, you can strike three times in every combat round. Turn to **50**.

16: Before you can go further you need a source of light. Will you take down the pine torch (turn to **25**), or would you prefer to light your lantern (turn to **67**)?

17: You can use the crystal ball (turn to **66**) or the three strange silver coins (turn to **24**). If you have neither of these, or decide not to use them, turn back to **37** and open one of the doors.

18: You are at the foot of a rough stone stairway that winds up around the walls of a narrow, circular tower. Staring into the gloom, you discern a crimson glow far above. You climb up and up – hundreds of feet, it seems. At last you reach the top of the tower. There is only one door off the landing – a heavy iron portal with a glowing, gloating red face inscribed into it. It swings back as you approach and you pass through into what must be the topmost chamber of the tower. Outside you can see massive, ponderous storm clouds against the starless night sky. There is a curtained alcove on the other side of the chamber. As you cross over to it, a sibilant voice seems to speak from within you, extolling the virtues of an eternity in service to the demon. If you have any *Honour*, try to roll equal to or less than your *Honour* score on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **46**; if you fail, turn to **27**. If you don't have any *Honour*, turn to **74**.

19: Chuckling humourlessly, he closes his grip on you. You cannot move. 'Quite wrong,' he says. 'Clearly your riddling skills leave much to be desired, but perhaps they will improve when you've been a guest at my castle for an eternity or two!' By his duplicity, the archfiend Slank has captured you. You are his prisoner forever, and the adventure ends here.

20: Do you have the ashes of a saint? If so, you scatter these over the demon's body – turn to **89**. If you don't have any ashes, turn to **84**.

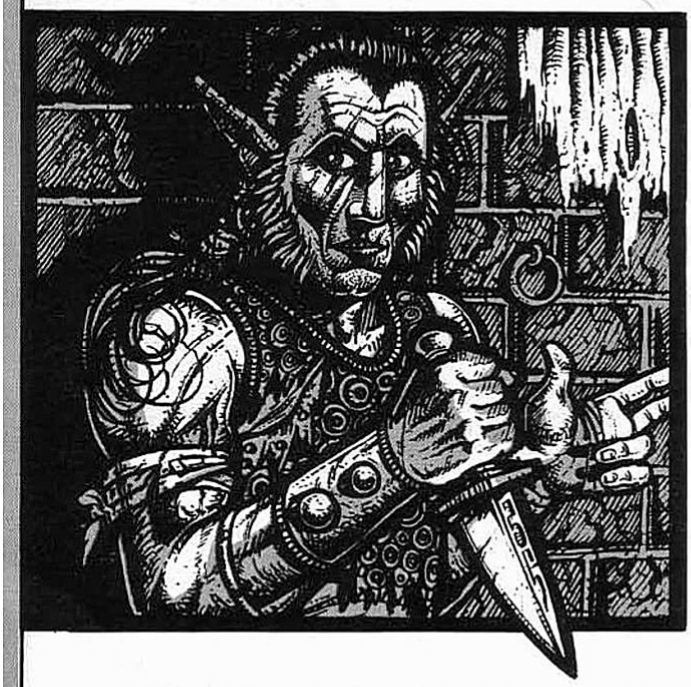
21: He reaches into a pouch at his belt and produces a number of wicked-looking devices. 'Pilliwinks is a game played with the fingers,' he explains as he fixes the thumbscrews onto you. Paralysing pain shoots up your arms. Through waves of agony you see the figure before you dissolve and alter – he is no longer an old man, but a tall figure clad in black robes.

'A generous soul is a lost soul,' says Slank with a demonic smile. 'Allow me to welcome you as my castle's latest guest.'

Your adventure has ended, but the torment is just beginning...

22: Human torsos dripping with gore hang on rusted meathooks along the larder walls. You can see maggots crawling on some of them. Slank obviously likes game adventurers. Ranged on wooden shelves you can see a number of jars and bottles. You lean closer to read the faded labels; they contain all manner of ingredients. There is a jar of newt's eyes, another of frog's toes, one contains a pickled dog's tongue and the next holds fillet of fen snake. One bottle has no label, but its contents are unmistakeably lizard legs. Among the more normal ingredients, you notice red pepper, parsley and salt. You can take up to three jars if you wish – note them down on your Adventure Record. Feeling your gorge rise at the sight and stench of the demon's awful larder you continue on your way (turn to **58**).

23: 'Oh. Well, at least you must have the ashes of a saint'? If you do, turn to **72**. If not, turn to **33**. (Gorbran was *not* a saint, by the way, if you met him in last issue's adventure.)▷



24: You toss the three coins down on the floor in front of you. One lands with the unicorn's head uppermost, the other two with the serpent's head. Does that give you any ideas? You can retrieve the coins if you wish, then turn back to **37** and choose which door to open.

25: As you take the torch from the bracket, you set off a trap! A hatch you had carelessly failed to notice opens beneath you and you plummet some 13 feet onto a cold stone floor. Somewhat dazed, you stagger to your feet and look around. In the bleary light and choking dust you can just make out a figure chained to the wall. As you approach with the torch you see he is an old man with a clouded, sightless right eye.

'I am Vimbol Greengosh,' he tells you. 'Are you the champion my sons have sent to rescue me? If so, help me out of these chains and your reward will exceed anything you can imagine.'

If you wish to do as he asks, turn to **60**. If you would rather leave him chained up, turn to **9**.

26: You pull the folds of the rug around you. It is comfortably warm and you are glad you had the foresight to bring it. Will you now try to get at the mask (turn to **77**), or leave through the archway (turn to **18**)?

27: Slank is trying to convince you to serve him. You dimly realize that he is probably using magic, but you cannot resist. You have always been the sort of halfheartedly unethical person who is easily led by those of strongly good or evil character. Slank is very definitely in the latter category. He steps from the alcove and you feel the last of your will desert you as you kneel before him. Now and forever, you are his cringing thrall...

28: You pound the door with your fist, producing a booming echo. After a few moments a small panel is slid back and the occupant of the room examines you. You see his eyes alight on the talisman Hogron gave you; immediately he gives a cry of delight and starts to clear his barricade from the other side of the door. You wait nervously in the passage, praying that all this noise won't alert the demon. Finally the door opens and the old man ushers you in. The place is a vast, vaulted library with books and pamphlets lining every inch of the walls from floor to ceiling.

'You've come at last!' says the old man, crying with joy. 'I knew my lads wouldn't let me down – I'm Vimbol Greengosh, of course.' He shows you to a leather armchair by the fireplace and thrusts a glass of tawny port wine into your hand. Obviously, although Slank's prisoner, he is not completely without creature comforts. He takes down a musty tome and opens it at a chapter headed *Dealing With Demons*. 'Now listen carefully, for there isn't much time. You should have a number of items, and this book describes how each item will affect Slank. Firstly, a four leaf clover will have much the same effect on him as a crucifix has on a vampire – he won't want to touch it or go anywhere near it. Second, if you throw my daughter's teardrop into his left eye you'll blind him completely, as I've already managed to destroy his right eye. Now, do you have the fragment of knight's armour and the hair of a nun?

If you have both these items turn to **64**. If not, turn to **23**.

29: Somehow you manage to drag yourself the last few yards and slump through the archway. The coldness is presumably a magical effect restricted to the last room, for after a few minutes you stop shivering. Rubbing the circulation back into your sword-hand, you look around you. Turn to **18**.

30: 'That's right!' he says, his tone of surprise veiling a slight irritation. 'I didn't expect you to get that one. All the same, I don't see how you could have cheated, so I suppose I'll have to let you go for now...' Suddenly he spits in your face! You blink and rub your eyes, and when you look again he is nowhere to be seen. You go back to the top of the stairs and try the other direction. Turn to **41**.

31: As Slank flails about blindly, you raise your bow and shoot the specially prepared arrow straight into his evil heart. He falls dead at your feet. Turn to **20**.

32: You descend a flight of stairs into what seems to be a pillared ballroom with a floor of polished white marble. There is a shadowed archway across on the other side of the room. However, as you walk warily towards this, you make a startling discovery – the floor underfoot is not marble at all, but solid ice. Several inches below you, frozen in the ice, you can see a bizarre demonic mask. As you peer down at this you suddenly realize how cold the room is getting. Your hands are turning blue and your teeth chatter uncontrollably. Do you have a bearskin rug? If so, turn to **26**. If not, turn to **59**.

33: Vimbol shrugs. 'Too bad. Still, maybe you can finish Slank off anyway – you'll just need to be that much more careful. Now, I wish you good luck.' He shows you to the library door and the two of you shake hands. As you continue along the corridor you can hear him replacing the barricade on the other side of the door. Turn to **2**.

34: You climb up to the first floor landing. From here you can go left (turn to **41**) or right (turn to **61**).

35: The mask is of black-laquered wood decorated with silver, and could be a fanciful representation of a demon's face. You have seen its like at several masquerade parties, although never crafted with such chilling effectiveness as this. Curiously, the mask has only one eye – the left – and that has a quartz lens set into it. Will you touch the mask (turn to **47**), take out one of your items (turn to **79**), or depart through the dark archway (turn to **18**)?

36: You pour a little of the oil from your lantern onto the surface of the pool, thereby calming the troubled waters. The Undine immediately becomes quiescent and sinks back into the pool. You cautiously dip your hand into the still water to take the stone bottle. If you wish to unstopper this now, turn to **63**. If not, note it down on your Adventure Record and turn to **44**.

37: After a brief, uneasy glance at the bas relief, you pass through the arch and make your way along a narrow, twisting passage that leads deep into the heart of the castle. You pass through a succession of gloomy chambers and finally climb a worn flight of steps to a landing where three doors face you. Each of the doors bears a plaque with an inscription on it:

Copper plaque – *To slay me you must pass through this door.*
Bronze plaque – *You should not pass through this door.*
Lead plaque – *The correct path is not beyond the copper-plaquered door.*

You grit your teeth. The demon is obviously toying with you. His mistake. You could open one of the doors – the door with the copper plaque (turn to **88**), the one with the bronze plaque (turn to **70**) or the one with lead plaque (turn to **13**). Or you could take an item from your backpack (turn to **17**).

38: You enter a large, low-ceilinged room with no other doorways. In the centre of the room stands a tall man in voluminous robes. He wears a patch over his right eye and stands by a pool of blood which is flowing from a gash in his arm. If you want to talk to him, turn to **82**. If you want to take an item from your backpack, turn to **4**.

39: You lift the ladle and sip a little of the mixture. Roll five dice – if you score equal to or less than your *Constitution*, turn to **5**. If you score greater than your *Constitution*, turn to **68**.

40: You stand over the fallen body for several minutes, half expecting Slank to rise a second time, and ready to renew the battle at once if he does. But he used the last of his sorcerous power against you; this time he stays dead. Turn to **89**.

41: You advance along a narrow corridor illuminated by the amber glow of oil lamps. Shortly you come to a door in the left-hand wall. You can try the door (turn to **51**) or continue on along the corridor (turn to **2**).

42: Do you have the *Wristband of Lightning*? If so, turn to **62**. If not, an electrical discharge as you try to step into the alcove hurls you back across the room. Deduct 4 points from you *Constitution*; if you are still alive you decide to leave and continue along the corridor – turn to **6**.

43: Smiling viciously, Slank steps from the alcove and stands before you, huge and awesome and *casting no shadow*. You hear the rumble of the approaching storm, drowned out by Slank's laughter. His surcoat and boots and vambraces are as black as the night and trimmed with silver; his pale skin has a translucent gleam. At first glance the face might almost be considered handsome – but then you see the clouded, sightless right eye, the face around it scarred and mutilated by terrible burns. The good eye shines with an awful, corrupt light and the expression twisting those fine features is one of utter evil.

Slank holds a lacquered mask in his left hand, and he brings this

up now to cover his face. The mask has a quartz lens which shields his good eye, so even if you have the teardrop you cannot use it. Neither is there time to draw your bow – you must fight him. Turn to **48**.

44: Will you leave the circular room through the door to your left (turn to **58**), or will you return to the landing and open the door with the copper plaque (turn to **88**) or the door with the bronze plaque (turn to **70**)?

45: Which of the following will you use against the Undine? The *Ring of Light* (turn to **80**); the *Potion of Dazzling Speed* (turn to **15**); your lantern (turn to **36**). If you decide not to try any of these, turn to **50**.

46: Slank is using his foul magic to try and persuade you to serve him, but no demon will ever corrupt an honourable and undaunting spirit like yours. Grimly, you push the curtain aside. Turn to **7**.

47: The mask is so cold that it burns your fingers. You try to wrap it in your cloak, but you can still feel the unnatural chill of it sapping your body heat. You cannot take it with you, then. Will you take an item from your backpack (turn to **79**), or leave the room (turn to **18**)?

48: Slank advances on you with a panther's grace, his robes fluttering in the breeze. There is a cold, damp, earthy smell like a waiting grave. The talons of his right hand are almost a cubit long; they sparkle like crystal and are razor-sharp.

Slank: *Fighting Prowess*: 12; *Constitution*: 23; 3-pt armour.

If you manage to defeat him, turn to **20**.

49: Beyond the double doors you see a dimly lit room. A pine torch burns in a bracket on the wall. The same heavy incense you noticed before lingers here. At the far end of the room you can just make out a darkened archway. There is blackness beyond. Will you return to the hallway and go upstairs (turn to **34**), or cross the room to the archway (turn to **16**)?

50: You are fighting an Undine, or Water Elemental. Every time you hit it you must roll your *Magical Fortitude* or less on two dice – failure to do this means you lose 1 point from your *Fighting Prowess*, down to a minimum of 4.

Undine: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 5; No armour.

If you win, turn to **3**.

51: The door seems to be to be barred or barricaded shut. Will you knock (turn to **28**), or carry on to the end of the corridor (turn to **2**)?

52: The correct answer is 'peerless'. If you answered this, turn to **30**. If you answered anything else, turn to **19**.

53: You slice through her bonds with your knife and carry her over to a corner of the room where you gently set her down. Gain 1 point of *Honour* for your charitable action. The woman nurses her blistered feet for a while, then looks up at you and speaks. 'I was a witch, and I sold my soul to the demon in return for knowledge and occult power. For helping me, I will give you what little aid I can.' She puts a catskin pouch around your neck – increase your *Magical Fortitude* by 1 above its Initial level for as long as you wear this. She also gives you three silver coins. 'These may show you the way,' she murmurs cryptically. Each has a unicorn's head on one face and a serpent's head with a forked tongue on the other. You are about to question her further when you see that she has passed out. You moisten her lips with a little wine, then pocket the coins and leave. Turn to **37**.

54: Curse the luck! Your knife breaks. If you didn't have a sword then you are now without any weapon at all, and must subtract 2 from your damage rolls from now on until you find one. If you do have a sword, you are certainly not going to risk breaking its blade on the ice. You decide to leave the damned mask where it is and go through the archway. Turn to **18**.

55: By pouring salt over the ice you lower its freezing point; it starts to melt, and you now have little difficulty in digging down to the mask with your knife. Turn to **35**.

56: Before continuing on your way, you could take either the poleaxe or the now-lifeless rug. You cannot take both because they are rather bulky items. You then proceed to the double doors at the end of the room. Turn to **32**.

57: You leave the teardrop in the mask's one eye and then cross the room to the archway. Cross the tear off your Adventure Record. Turn to **18**.

58: You enter a long, oak-beamed dining hall with fading portraits high up on the walls. Ignoring two smaller doorways, you make your way along the table towards the double doors at the far end of the room. You pass a wide stone hearth where a raging log fire crackles and spits. Over the hearth hangs a great poleaxe and on the floor in front of it there is a fine, white bearskin rug. You can either go over to the hearth (turn to **76**) or carry on to the double doors (turn to **32**).

59: You panic and run for the archway, but your feet slip on the ice and you scramble frantically on all fours. Roll four dice, attempting to score equal to or less than your *Constitution*. If you succeed, turn to **29**. If you fail, turn to **65**.

60: You have no trouble in breaking the rusty manacles from his wrists. 'What a generous soul you are!' he exclaims, favouring you with a rather peculiar smile. 'How about a game of pilliwinks?' Will you accept his offer (turn to **21**), or decline to play (turn to **71**)?

61: You walk along a short corridor and come to a low door. If you want to go through this door, turn to **38**; if you want to turn back and go the other way, turn to **41**.

62: An incandescent bolt arcs across the alcove entrance as you step through it, but the energy is absorbed by your *Wristband* and you are unharmed. The sword hangs on the wall before you. The rubies glitter and the metal gleams in the wan light of the two braziers to either side of the alcove. As you reach for the sword, thick smoke billows up from these braziers and coagulates into a dark serpentine form in the air above your head. With a shock, you realize this smoke-creature is alive and intent on fighting you!

Rauchwurm: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 8; No armour.

If you win, turn to **11**.

63: An emerald vapour issues from the open neck of the bottle. When it clears you find a tall figure with green skin standing before you. Arms folded across his barrel-like chest, he bows low. 'Greetings, master!' he booms. 'I am Ghilbee, and for releasing me I can grant you skill, stamina or knowledge.' If you choose skill, he will restore your *Fighting Prowess* to its Initial level. If you choose stamina, he will restore 4 points of your *Constitution*. If you choose knowledge, he gives you a clue to defeating Slank (turn to **69** to find out what it is). After performing whichever of these services you request, he vanishes. Turn to **44**.

64: Following instructions in his book, Vimbol affixes the sliver of armour to the point of one of your arrows. He then restrings your bow using the nun's hair. 'This will kill Slank at once if you shoot him through the heart,' he explains. 'Lastly, then, do you have the ashes of a saint?'

If you do, turn to **72**. If not, turn to **33**. (Incidentally, if you did last issue's adventure and burnt Gorbran thinking he was a saint, you were wrong.)

65: You are only a few yards from the archway, but the terrible cold numbs your limbs and you slump down on the icy floor. You cannot feel any pain, but you realize you are dying. You note with dispassionate wonder the curious sighing sound your breath makes as it freezes on the air. Strangely calm, you surrender to the eternal dark...

66: The doors do not look any different when viewed through the crystal ball. Turn back to **37** and think again.

67: Holding up your lantern, you cross over to the archway – only to find that the passage beyond ends in a blank wall after only a few yards. You search in vain for a secret panel, but you are finally forced to accept that it is a dead end. Puzzled, you return to the hallway and try the stairs. Turn to **34**.

68: The effect of the brew hits you like a poleaxe and you fall to the floor. This is the favourite soup of the demon, but to any mortal it is a virulent poison. The life ebbs from your pain-wracked body. Your quest has ended in failure.

69: Before he disappeared, the genie told you cryptically that 'the eyes have it' and suggested that you go back to the landing and try another of the doors. Turn to **44**.▷

70: You open the door into what seems to be a kitchen. It is full of smoke and steam and is almost unbearably hot. Looking around, you see a cauldron bubbling over the roaring fire and a small doorway to one side that presumably leads to the larder. Directly across the kitchen from where you entered is a copper-bound door stamped with odd runic designs. You can look in the larder (turn to **22**), look in the cauldron (turn to **85**) or go to the next room (turn to **58**).

71: He shrugs and seems to fade away into the shadows. You are alone. Go to **9**.

72: 'Excellent. After killing Slank you must scatter the ashes over his body. Now, I wish you good luck.' You shake hands before taking your leave of him and continuing along the corridor. Behind you, you hear pushing the library furniture back against the door. Turn to **2**.

73: The room consists of a hexagonal main chamber with a large alcove off the far end. Hanging on the wall in the alcove you can see a gilded longsword decorated with rubies. As you step closer, you notice an acrid smell in the room and a blue-white flickering across the alcove entrance. Will you step into the alcove (turn to **42**), or continue along the corridor (turn to **6**)?

74: You are one of the most disreputable and unprincipled degenerates of all time. Slank is trying to convince you to become his servant, but no way are you going to take orders from a wimp like him! You sneer and rip down the curtain. Turn to **7**.

75: Smiling viciously, Slank steps from the alcove and towers over you in his robes as black as night. At first glance his face might almost be considered handsome – but then you see the clouded, sightless right eye, the face around it scarred and mutilated by terrible burns. The other eye shines with an awful, corrupt light, and the expression twisting those fine features is one of utter and inhuman evil. From outside the tower comes the rumble of distant thunder, and Slank answers it with triumphant laughter.

If you have Perterra Greengosh's teardrop, you can cast it into his eye – turn to **87**. If you don't have this item, you must fight him – turn to **48**.

76: As you step forwards, the rug comes to life and rises up, challenging you with an eerie, hissing growl.

Bearskin Rug: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 7; No armour.

If you defeat it, turn to **56**.

77: You attack the ice with your knifeblade, but it is refreezing as fast as you can chip it away. If you are determined to reach the mask you will have to think of something else to try – turn to **8**. If you are ready to give up and go through the archway, turn to **18**.

78: Slank can scent your fear and almost hear your racing heartbeat – although blind, he is yet dangerous. He lunges at you with the long, sparkling talons of his right hand, using them as a fencer uses a sword.

Slank: *Fighting Prowess*: 7; *Constitution*: 23; 3-pt armour.

If you defeat him, turn to **20**.

79: If you have them, you can use: the four leaf clover (turn to **81**); the daughter's teardrop (turn to **57**); a newt's eye (turn to **14**).

If you do not have any of these, or do not wish to use them, you now leave the room (turn to **18**).

80: Your ring emits a blinding pulse of light, but this has no effect whatsoever on the creature. It strikes you with a watery fist as you fumble for your weapon – roll one die to determine the damage from this blow, then turn to **50**.

81: You leave the clover in the mouth of the demon mask. That should prevent Slank from touching it. You trudge acros the icy floor to the archway and step through. Turn to **18**.

82: He comes over and lays his hands on your shoulders – apparently in a gesture of friendship, but you feel as if you are bound in shackles of cold iron. He fixes you with his one good eye and says, 'I have a riddle for you. My first is equality, my last is inferiority, and my whole is superiority – what am I?' Decide on your answer (think carefully!) and then turn to **52**.

83: You notice a bottle of grey-green stone at the bottom of the pool. Before you decide whether to reach in and take it or not, the surface of the pool starts rippling and heaving like a lake in a storm. Suddenly a watery being rises up out of the turbulent pool. Will you draw your weapon (turn to **50**), or find some other way to fight it (turn to **45**)?

84: Hushed, whispering voices seem to call from outside the tower – '*Awake, master. Death cannot hold you.*' You go to the window and look out, but there is nothing but the night and the howling wind.

Something stirs behind you. You freeze at the sound, then slowly turn... Slank has risen again, but altered now to his true form – he is much smaller than before, stooped, almost frail. His face is grey and lined, twisted and misshapen such that the hollow sockets of his eyes are not level. The effect is even more horrible than his previous appearance.

'I still have one life left,' he snarls. The voice is a strangled, halting croak. His power is greatly diminished, but you will have to fight hard to prevail against him.

Slank: *Fighting Prowess*: 7; *Constitution*: 18; 2-pt armour.

If you beat him, turn to **40**.

85: You get a whiff of the stuff in the cauldron when you are only halfway across the room, and it almost puts you off taking a look. When you do look, you wish you hadn't – it is a green, slimy broth full of unmentionable ingredients. If by any chance you want to drink this foul brew, turn to **39**. Otherwise you could continue on into the next room (turn to **58**) or investigate the larder (turn to **22**).

86: Roll one die. If you score 4 or less, turn to **54**. If you score 5 or 6, turn to **10**.

87: The little girl's teardrop is like an acid to Slank. He screams in rage and pain and clutches at his eye. Did Vimbol Greengosh explain to you the purpose of the armour fragment and the nun's hair? If so, turn to **31**. If not, turn to **78**.

88: You pass along a winding tunnel and enter a vaulted room lit with a sombre green radiance. A dark silhouette takes form in front of you. A tall, majestic woman. She is – magnificent. You stand in awe. A watery green hue dissolves from the room as she lifts the veil covering her face and you stare into the unfiltered light of her eyes. They shine like polished jade. You try to turn away, but, try as you might, you cannot break her mesmerizing gaze.

Mournful voices seem to echo in your head, greeting you – the voices of a hundred stony victims entrapped by the gorgon to become her companions and lovers. They stand in shadowed alcoves all about. Your world is with theirs now.

Share silence...

89: From an upper window you watch the exodus of the thousands of souls Slank had kept imprisoned here, some of them for aeons. They file from the castle and out across the swamps, where they fade from your mortal sight as they pass into the afterlife. You scan the milling throng for Vimbol Greengosh, and finally catch sight of him – capering merrily, he dances away from the castle towards whatever fate the afterlife reserves for merchants...

At last you are alone in the castle. You descend through the empty halls and stride away across the marshes. You do not look back until you reach the Mungo Hills, and by then there is no sign of the castle.

As you make your way back towards the town, you find that seers and wizards have already learned of your success. Baladeers roam the villages singing epic songs which tell of the archfiend's destruction and which refer to you as Demonslayer, or Knight of Souls, or several other rather flattering titles.

Hogron and his brothers have invited the whole town to an alfresco party in your honour. You are carried shoulder-high through the streets to the main square, where Hogron delivers a long-winded speech and then presents you with a chest containing 700 gold pieces and a suit of enchanted chainmail!

Your quest is ended. But keep your Adventure Record somewhere safe, for who knows what great deeds yet await you?□